

# **Guided Reading: Literacy Instruction and Race Production**

BY

MARCUS CROOM

B.S., North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, 2001

M.Div., Shaw University, Raleigh, 2009

M.S.A., North Carolina Central University, Durham, 2011

THESIS

Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction (Literacy, Language and Culture)  
in the Graduate College of the  
University of Illinois at Chicago, 2018

Chicago, Illinois

Defense Committee:

Alfred Tatum, Chair and Advisor

Tania Mertzman Habeck, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Amanda Lewis, Department of Sociology, Department of African American Studies

Aria Razfar

Rebecca Woodard

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Rosalind Croom, without whom this would never have begun. I also dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Marella Croom, and my children, Marrea and Mason Croom, without whom it would never have been accomplished. To my father, Earl Artis, I celebrate the happiness of our today, of our here and now. Also, to my siblings Romaine Barnett and Gay Hill, and my cousin-big brother, Joe Friday (Demond Akridge), I love each of you and appreciate how you each supported your little brother in your own ways. With all my heart to my grandparents: Katherine Langston Bryant Wells, Roger Garfield Cox, Mack and Nancy Mary Lee Hicks Artis—eternal gratitude and love. To all of my law and blood relatives—especially each generation of nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, and uncles—and to my ancestral lineage, some reportedly never enslaved and some likely enslaved: I owe you all a debt that is unimaginable. Yet, for my ancestors' part, you would probably say that I owe you nothing if I could speak to you now. After all, you love me, I am your legitimate legacy, and you saw your contribution to me as simple duty. Once again ancestors, you are beautiful beyond words. For all of this, from all of you mentioned above, I memorialize my infinite thankfulness and to you I dedicate this dissertation.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to every racially nonWhite person, especially each Black person, who never experienced labor, leisure, or life in the post-White world. Dr. Mary Rhodes Hoover is especially in mind as I write this. May this theoretical and empirical contribution honor all that each of you have always already been.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my dissertation committee—Tania Habeck, Amanda Lewis, Aria Razfar, Dean Alfred Tatum, and Rebecca Woodard—for their unwavering support, assistance, and guidance. At the same time, I happily memorialize my gratitude to those supporters of mine in Goldsboro, NC, Greensboro, NC, Durham, NC, and the various communities, organizations, churches, and schools with which I have had the pleasure of working in North Carolina and Illinois. I name the Collaboration for Early Childhood because I have the honor of supporting this cutting-edge work as a board member. I name Trinity United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, III, the ministers, and fellow members because this is where my family is being nurtured weekly in word and practice. I also name Oak Park, IL because this community is where my family carries out the day-to-day life of home and school as we share our lives with family, friends (like Tom Purrenhage), and many supporters—near, on social media, and far.

To the UIC College of Education, especially Elise Wilson (there are no words for all you did for me!), Sharon Earthely, Karen Dop, Melissa Santiago (you kept me on the Dean's busy calendar!), Teresa Vargas-Vega, Dana Baumgartner, Ph.D., Loretta Casey (the UIC Children's Center makes lifelong friendships!), Rob Schroeder (thank you for making me visible!), Ed Briscoe (Bro!), J. Garpue Lieway (Lieway!), Arnold Lee (our technology superhero!), Bill Gallaga, Cathy Foley-DiVittorio (I wouldn't have gotten paid without you, Cathy!), and the faculty who selected me for the Dean's Merit Award: To each one of you from my heart I say thanks. I am also indebted to each student who learned with me in the ED 100: Introduction to Urban Education course I taught for two years. All of you made me better and for that I thank you. To my fellow doctoral students in the Literacy, Language and Culture (LLC) program, and throughout the UIC College of Education, I honor your brilliance and offer a parting word: I'm all the proof you need. Make it happen!

To the many scholars, dead and living, who helped me in innumerable ways as I journeyed to this end, especially *Cultivating New Voices among Scholars of Color* (CNV), as well as (ordered alphabetically by my daughter): Quaylan Allen, Arnetha Ball, Karen Bean, Keffrelyn Brown, Dean Vicki Chou, Patricia Edwards, Noah Golden, Carl Grant, Juan Guerra, Dean Creasie Hairston, Tao Han, Tyrone Howard, Decoteau Irby, Marlon C. James, George Kamberelis, Joyce King, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Sonja Lanehart, Jud Laughter, Kim Lawless, Chance Lewis, Kofi Lomotey, Norma Lopez-Reyna, Marvin Lynn, Danny Martin, David Mayrowetz, Ebony McGee, Charles W. Mills, Rich Milner, Rebecca Rogers, Joe Rumenapp, Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz, Peter Smagorinsky, Mariana Souto-Manning, Howard C. Stevenson, David Stovall, Mike K. Thomas, Terri Thorkildsen, Steve Tozer, Marc Van Overbeke, Melissa Wetzel, Paul Zavitkovsky—  
THANK YOU.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>CHAPTER</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE</u></b>
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem and Significance.....	10
1.3 Significance of the Study .....	11
1.4 Purpose of the Study .....	13
2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE .....	15
2.1 Conceptual Framework .....	15
2.1.1 Race in Education Research .....	15
2.2 Literacy Research and Race .....	35
2.2.1 Literacy Instruction and Race .....	43
3. METHODS .....	54
3.1 Theoretical Framework.....	54
3.2 Case Study Design.....	57
3.3 Setting .....	59
3.4 Participants .....	61
3.5 Instrumentation.....	64
3.6 Instructional Sessions/Routines.....	64
3.7 Data Collection.....	65
3.8 Data Analysis.....	72
3.9 Summary .....	87
4. FINDINGS .....	88
4.0 Overview.....	88
4.1 Teachers' Conceptualizations of Race.....	88
4.1.1 Finding 1: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Language Practice.....	91
4.1.2 Finding 2: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Text Practice.....	98
4.1.3 Finding 3: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Evasion Practice.....	113
4.1.4 Finding 4: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Dysconscious Practice.....	132
4.1.5 Finding 5: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Racial Literacies Practice....	165
4.1.6 Other Language and Practice Findings .....	171
4.2 Summary .....	176
5. DISCUSSION .....	179
5.1 Implications for Instruction .....	179
5.2 Implications for Research .....	184
5.3 Implications for Policy .....	187
5.4 Limitations .....	188
5.5 Conclusion .....	189

APPENDICES .....	190
Appendix A: Glossary of Terms .....	190
Appendix B: Instrumentation.....	192
CITED LITERATURE .....	196
VITA .....	209

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Core Studies from <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> .....	46
2. Examples of Teacher-Developed Lesson Experiences.....	65
3. Data Sources.....	66
4. Data Quantity.....	67
5. Lesson Data.....	70
6. Genres of Race.....	79
7. Examples of Genres of Race.....	79
8. Coding.....	82
9. Inter-Rater Reliability Report.....	86
10. Five Conceptualizations of Race and their Practices.....	90
11. Conceptualizations of Race in Language Practice and Race Coding Grid for Teacher A & B.....	98
12. Lesson Seven Observation Instrument Examples.....	99
13. Conceptualizations of Race in Text Practice and Race Coding Grid for Teacher A.....	112
14. Conceptualizations of Race in Evasion Practice and Race Coding Grid for Teacher A & B.....	131
15. Assessment Race Practice Evidence.....	175

## LIST OF FIGURES

<u>FIGURE</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
1.	Race Coding Grid.....	84
2.	Analytic Layers of Situated Teaching Practice.....	90
3.	Teacher A Survey Response.....	92
4.	Teacher B Survey Response.....	94
5.	Teacher B Pre- and Post-SIT Task Responses.....	133
6.	Teacher B: Information and Rapport Building Games.....	157
7.	17th Century Map of Africa by Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571-1638).....	161
8.	Teacher A Pre- and Post-SIT Task Responses.....	165
9.	Illustration Toward a Race Mediated Teaching Model (RMTM).....	172

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AERA	American Educational Research Association
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CRT in Ed	Critical Race Theory in Education
PRT	Practice of Race Theory
SIT Task	Student Identification by Teacher Task
RMTM	Race Mediated Teaching Model



## SUMMARY

*"The magic of the word 'white' is already broken, and the Color Line in civilization has been crossed in modern times as it was in the great past."*

—*W.E.B. Du Bois (1906)*

*"Students of color have the ability to acquire lower-to-upper levels of literacy as well as or better than any other students—from preschool to the college level—if taught."*

—*Mary Rhodes Hoover (1990)*

Throughout this study, when the terms “racing,” “raced,” or “raced as” are used they simply mean, in different verb tenses, the thought and practice of racialization or race. Also, race is defined as consequential social practice—or more technically, consequential D/discourse (see Gee, 1999 for his distinction between big “D” Discourse and little “d” discourse). D/discourses, which involve “as if” worlds or figured worlds (Holland, Lachicotte, Jr., Skinner, & Cain, 1998), are meaningful ways of being (“D”) and of using language (“d”). When race is defined as consequential social practice, race involves meaningful ways of being, language, figured worlds, *and* the consequences that arise from all of these, whether such consequences are material, practical, or intangible. With this theorization of race—practice of race theory (PRT)—I investigate teacher conceptualization of race during literacy instruction when the teaching and learning of valued literate practices, including literacy skills, involve children who are raced as “Black” or “African American.”

The endeavor of schooling in the U.S. has nearly sixty years of published literacy research about how to successfully teach valued literate practices (Brandt, 1998, p. 169; 2001, p. 106) to children raced as Black or African American.

This empirical understanding is especially rich for literacy research questions involving children raced as Black who live in poverty (e.g., Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990). Following is a brief sample from this half-century body of knowledge: Jeanne Chall's (1967, p. 311) *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*; George Weber's (1971) *Inner City Children Can Be Taught to Read*; Mary Rhodes Hoover's (1978) "Characteristics of Black Schools at Grade Level"; Ronald Edmonds' (1979) "Effective Schools for the Urban Poor"; Irving Pressley McPhail's (1983; 2005) "A Critique of George Weber's Study: Inner-City Children Can Be Taught to Read: Four Successful Schools"; an entire journal issue about "Urban Schools that Work" in *The Journal of Negro Education* (Jones-Wilson, 1988); Slavin, Madden, Karweit, Livermon, and Dolan's (1989) "Can Every Child Learn? An Evaluation of 'Success for All' in an Urban Elementary School"; Hoover, Dabney, and Lewis' (1990) *Successful Black and Minority Schools: Classic Models*; Foorman, Francis, Beeler, Winikates, and Fletcher's (1997) "Early Intervention for Children with Reading Problems: Study Designs and Preliminary Findings"; Jeanne Chall's (2000) final book, *The Academic Achievement Challenge* (pp. 150-151); J. Helen Perkins' (2001) "Listen to their Teacher's Voices: Effective Reading Instruction for Fourth Grade African American Students"; Lynson Moore Beaulieu's (2002) "African American Children and Literacy: Literacy Development Across the Elementary, Middle, and High School Years"; Craig, Connor, and Washington's (2003) "Early Positive Predictors of Later Reading Comprehension for African American Students: A Preliminary Investigation"; Diane Lapp and James Flood's (2005) "Exemplary Reading Instruction in the Elementary School: How Reading Develops-How Students Learn and How Teachers Teach"; J. Helen Perkins and Robert B. Cooter, Jr.'s (2005) "Evidence-based Literacy Education and the African American Child"; Alfred Tatum and

Gholnecsar E. Muhammad's (2012) "African American Males and Literacy Development in Contexts that are Characteristically Urban"; Gholnecsar E. Muhammad and Marcelle Haddix's (2016) "Centering Black Girls' Literacies: A Review of Literature on the Multiple Ways of Knowing of Black Girls"; and Paola Pilonieta's (2017) "First- and Second-Grade Urban Students' Path to Comprehension Strategy Use: A Practitioner's Framework."

Given this nearly sixty-year-old body of knowledge, how might we explain the fact that, as we approach 2020, we lack (among educators, researchers, and others) the broad assumption that raced as Black (or African American) students can learn valued literate practices, like reading, with high proficiency? This leaves aside assumptions about other literate practices like writing, digital literacies, speaking multiple languages, and meaningful listening. More crucially, how might the field of literacy education explain our lack of professional progress, where teaching (raced as) Black students is concerned, given how much has been publicly reported across over fifty years of literacy research? What might account for this enduring enigma?

I argue that the common sense or hegemonic view of race is a significant contributor to this enduring situation, out of the many reasons why raced as Black students may inadequately perform valued literate practices (e.g., school instruction, school curriculum, school organizational characteristics, the economic and sociogeopolitical positioning of particular schools, public policy, and education policy). To be clear, the enduring situation is this: we lack the broad assumption that children raced as Black can learn to master valued literate practices as well as or better than all other students. If this were the broad assumption, the indicators of Black children not performing as necessary in literacy education would raise questions about these students' schooling experiences more often than it would raise questions about the students

themselves. In other words, the default logic from a vindicationist philosophy toward Black children would be to address any barriers to Black children's literacy development, not the rationale to somehow 'fix' Black children. Unfortunately, the common sense understanding of race supports the logic that Black children, their families, and their communities are in some way the problem, rather than problematizing the consequentially racialized situation in which Black children are experiencing teaching and learning. Literacy research and teaching lacks significant professional progress toward embracing this alternative approach to Black children's literacy development. A popular quote by Dutch inspirational speaker, Alexander den Heijer, makes a similar point this way: "When a flower doesn't bloom you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower." I include this quote to point our attention toward the racialized situation in which Black children experience teaching and learning.

A contributing, complex phenomenon in this enduring situation is common sense or hegemonic race production, which includes racially White superordinate, anti-Black, deficiency philosophy thought and practice (Drake, 1987; Hoover, 1990; Leonardo, 2013; Mirón & Inda, 2000; Puzzo, 1964; Stuurman, 2000). As I review the literature, common sense or hegemonic race production has unique explanatory value where this educational enigma is concerned; an enigma that reaches across units of analysis from the micro level of the everyday classroom to the macro level of the elite processes whereby literacy research is conducted and reported in the United States. I also argue that race should be theorized as consequential social practice in the fields of education and literacy in order to disrupt common sense or hegemonic race production. When it is understood that race is consequential social practice, race can be practiced differently or even not practiced at all. This approach to race points toward the need to develop racial

literacies to guide social practice in our racialized world. “Racial literacies” refers to the critical, human cultural toolkit, accumulating since the invention of race, that supports human well-being amid the social thought and practice of race (i.e., the human creation and consumption of race). Racial literacies enable the situated reading, critiquing, and (re)authoring of race. This term and definition synthesizes and expands the construct “racial literacy” according to my own research and the various uses found in archival literatures (for example, see Guinier, 2004; Horsford, 2014; Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Sealey-Ruiz, 2011; Skerrett, 2011; Stevenson, 2014; Twine, 2004). Perhaps theorizing race as consequential social practice will catalyze attainment of the outcomes that we should broadly expect among raced as Black children in U.S. schools (see also Anderson, 2007).

Conceptually, I narrowly focus this study on the microanalytic unit of everyday instruction, more specifically the suborganization of the everyday classroom (Barr & Dreeben, 1983). In this study, the suborganization of the everyday classroom is represented by two cases from dyadic teacher-student interaction in the more controlled instructional environment of a Midwestern university literacy practicum. I chose this setting with the reasoning that if race production occurs in a more controlled instructional environment, like a university literacy practicum, it is likely to occur in a far more complex, “live” classroom as well (Mertzman, 2008). Therefore, I use the dyadic subunit to investigate teachers’ race production and the significance of teachers’ race production for literacy instruction with Black children. I ask: How is teacher conceptualization of race evident in literacy instruction?

To summarize, I am pondering U.S. teachers as sponsors of literacy (Brandt, 1998, 2001) in an everyday situation of literacy instruction; like one-on-one instruction, group instruction, or

guided reading, for example. I'm wondering if noteworthy race production is occurring as teachers create, enact, and recreate instruction; that is, race production guided by a common sense or hegemonic understanding of race. If this "guided racing" is occurring as teachers carry out instruction with students, within a subunit of instruction (Barr & Dreeben, 1983), what is the significance of teachers' "guided racing" where it concerns students who are raced as Black? From the standpoint of developing Black students' multiple literacies, "guided racing" points toward the possibility of having well-prepared teachers scaffold and support Black children and their peers in developing racial literacies along with other literacies. Just as guided reading might help children develop print literacies, "guided racing" might help children develop racial literacies. Racial, print, digital and other literacies are all needed for life, labor, and leisure in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Abstract**

Race is un(der)theorized by many scholars and practitioners in the field of education and literacy in the U.S. At the same time, Black children's multiple literacies are routinely un(der)developed by current processes and practices of schooling in the U.S. Perhaps a theoretical and empirical contribution to the field of education and literacy will help shift these fields from the common sense view of race to the consequential social practice view of race, while increasing the number of Black children who experience literacy instruction that develops their multiple literacies.

In this multiple case study, I investigated how two experienced literacy teachers—White women completing the reading specialist credential—evidenced their conceptualizations of race during one-on-one practicum instruction with Black children in the elementary grades, a Black girl and a Black boy. I designed a qualitative investigation to answer the following: How is teacher conceptualization of race evident in literacy instruction? Race critical practice analysis was used to analyze the collected data. Teachers evidenced five conceptualizations of race during the investigation. Findings have research, practice, and policy implications for the fields of education and literacy.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

This investigation is shaped by my philosophical stance as a vindicationist literacy researcher (Hoover, 1990). As such, vindicationist philosophy (Drake, 1987) influences problem selection, question development, design, data collection, analysis, and reporting of this investigation. In my review of the literature, I found that in the field of education and literacy, race is inadequately theorized (Lalik & Hinchman, 2001; Leonardo, 2013; O'Connor, Lewis, & Mueller, 2007). Also, Lalik & Hinchman (2001) argue that “Within the literacy research community [particularly among those they identify as “white liberal researchers”], we have avoided talk of race as well as other social variables (Gee, 2000), instead focusing on method as a central and enduring theme (Luke, 1998)” (pp. 541-542). Importantly, their point does not apply to all persons in the literacy research community. In fact, there are many scholars who have long advanced critical perspectives of race in the field of literacy. Yet, this significant body of race critical literacy scholarship is often positioned as less mainstream than literacy scholarship that gives little consideration to race or does not address race at all. Therefore, there remains a need for race critical literacy scholarship along with the need to reposition such scholarship as core literacy research, rather than interesting compliments to “the core.”

At the same time, this investigation is also a response to conventional and innovative measures of Black students’ literacy development which suggest that current processes and practices of schooling in the U.S. routinely result in the un(der)development of Black children’s multiple literacies. Mindful of these issues, I intend to make a theoretical and empirical



contribution which might further advance race critical literacy scholarship and the development of Black children's multiple literacies.

O'Connor, Lewis, & Mueller (2007) report, "race has been undertheorized in contemporary education research" (p. 541). They find that race has been (under)theorized as either a variable or as a culture. A number of literacy studies reflect the characteristics that O'Connor et al., (2007) describe when they refer to Michaels' (1992) "anticipation of culture by race":

That is, we presume that "to be Navajo you have to do Navajo things, but you can't really count as doing Navajo things unless you already are Navajo"

(Michaels, 1992, p. 677). Although we must substitute *Black* for *Navajo* in this instance, the effect is the same. Such anticipation reifies race as a stable and objective category and links it deterministically to culture. (p. 542)

As they argue, one's race should not be understood as one's culture. Further, when race is assumed to be a variable "researchers rely on statistical models where race is included as one of many control variables (e.g., social class, previous achievement, school resources) and is treated as an individual attribute" (p. 542). This is problematic because "race itself merely marks a social location. It is an ascribed characteristic and a political classification system" (p. 543). As such, assuming that race is a variable does not give enough attention to racial discrimination and gives too much attention to an arbitrary, fluid label.

O'Connor et al.'s (2007) descriptions are particular examples of the common sense understanding of race. Pascale (2008) defines the common sense understanding of race as

a saturation of cultural knowledge that we cannot fail to recognize and which, through its very obviousness, passes without notice. Ideological hegemony operates at the level of common sense—in the assumptions that we make about life and the things we accept as natural. Common sense leads people to believe that we simply see what is there to be seen. (p. 725)

According to this definition, the common sense conceptualization of race, the one that includes self-evident and biological notions of race, is most familiar. This inadequate conceptualization of race is one of at least two ways to theorize race.

In contrast with the common sense conceptualization of race is a conceptualization of race that I designate as consequential D/discourse—defined as meaningful ways of being (“D”) and meaningful ways of using language (“d”) that involves figured worlds and includes various consequences (Gee, 1999; Holland et al., 1998; Mirón & Inda, 2000). In less technical language, race can be conceptualized as consequential social practice.

Current anthropology broadly rejects traditional, biological notions of race (<http://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>). Instead of understanding race as blood, bone, hair, skin, or even biologized culture, some race scholars discuss race as a human cultural practice—in contrast with the old assumption that race is a self-evident, natural human feature (Appiah, 1986; Wilson, 1999). More specifically, and from a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978), race is a mediating tool of social relationships and social practice (Nasir & Hand, 2006; Warmington, 2009). Conceptualizing race as consequential social practice contrasts with conceptualizing race as common sense (Bernasconi, 2001; Bourdieu, 1977; Gee, 1999; Holland et al., 1998; Mirón & Inda, 2000; Pascale, 2008).

Several researchers report teachers' and teacher candidates' conceptions of race in North America (Burkholder, 2011; Sleeter, 1993; Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005). Burkholder's (2011) study finds that nonBlack, American teachers generally had at least three conceptions of race from 1900 to 1954: race as nation (1900-1938), race as color (1939-1945), and race as culture (1946-1954). When sociopolitically mainstream, American teachers understood race as nation, this meant that they assumed that domestic and foreign status (or lack thereof in the case of Black persons) was a racial distinction. In either case, Whiteness was the basic criteria of American citizenship. Thus, even though some foreign Whites were considered racially inferior to domestic Whites, these inferiorized foreign Whites were still qualified to assimilate into an Americanized social standing. Importantly, even during this early period race and culture was being conflated in (racial) tolerance pedagogy.

When these American teachers shifted to understanding race as color, this meant that the assumed racial distinctions between foreign White minorities and the domestic White majority dissolved, leaving simply Caucasian (majority) and Colored (minorities). During this period (1939-1945), scientific ways of thinking about race became prominent in education. For example, posters, pamphlets, comic books, children's books, and movies offered by anthropologists and tolerance educators became widespread in mainstream schools. From this scientific perspective of race, culture (as defined by anthropology) explained human differences, not race. The tolerance/intercultural pedagogy that began before 1938 became dominant in education between 1939-1945.

When mainstream teachers in the U.S. understood race as culture, this meant that they simply did not speak of "race," preferring instead to refer to racial minorities as culturally

different from the racial majority. Between 1946-1954, the civil rights movement grew in prominence while teachers grew silent about racial equity and race itself. During this period it became bad manners or a sign of poor education to hurl racial stereotypes and epithets at nonWhites in the classroom. Following World War II, intercultural education became intergroup education. The colorblind ideal also became increasingly favored as a tolerance tactic during this period, along with racial code words and racial etiquette. As a result, Burkholder (2011) reports: “The only way that teachers could live up to the promise of the colorblind ideal, after all, was if they reified race as color and entrenched a static and essentialist conception of race-as-culture into American educational discourse” (p. 170). In other words, all of these teachers’ conceptions of race, from 1900 to 1954, stem from common sense notions of race, including the early anthropological understandings of race in America.

Since the rise of the civil rights movement, other researchers have examined teachers’ conceptions of race. For example, Sleeter (1993) studied White teachers’ conceptions of race and her research aligns with Burkholder. Sleeter (1993) offered:

Many of the twenty-six white teachers began the [two year, staff development] program with a “color-blind” perspective, and throughout the two years, seven steadfastly maintained it; by the second year, these teachers’ attendance at sessions dwindled because of the program’s focus on race. What does it mean to construct an interpretation of race that denies [race]? (p. 161)

As this suggests, the colorblind approach of the “race as culture” period (1946-1954) was still preferred by some teachers despite the advances of the civil rights movement. But not only does

Sleeter find the colorblind approach among the teachers in her study, she also finds that in teachers' school lessons about race:

Americans of color were lumped with immigrants who were collectively defined as "other," bringing customs that are, at best, interesting to learn about and share when there is time. "Whiteness" was taken as the norm, as natural. When teachers told me about "multicultural lessons" or "multicultural bulletin boards," what they usually drew my attention to was the flat representations of people of color that had been added; multidimensional representations of whiteness throughout the school were treated as a neutral background not requiring comment. (p. 166-167)

When we compare Sleeter's findings with Burkholder's, it is clear that teachers' conceptions of race across the period from 1954 to the 1980s did not change as much as they should have.

In addition, Solomon, Portelli, Daniel & Campbell (2005) point out that North American (Canadian and U.S.) schooling, in which the racial demographics of preservice teachers are concerned, is fairly uniform. What they describe about Canadian schools is quite similar to U.S. schools:

Increased racial diversity within Canadian schools and society in general is seldom reflected amongst teacher education candidates enrolled in faculties of education. The continued over-representation of white, female, middle class and heterosexual bodies within faculties clearly belies the increased minority representation in the schools. (p. 149)

Across both of these countries in North America, the racial demographics of preservice teachers conform to the same general patterns. Thus, their teacher research in Canada has implications for the U.S. and other countries with similar racial patterns.

Using discourse analysis, Solomon et al. (2005) found that preservice teachers, 140 of whom were White students, had three kinds of written responses to Peggy McIntosh's (1990) article, "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack": ideological incongruence; negotiating white capital; and liberalist notions of individualism and meritocracy. These responses are important to note because the ideological incongruence they found took the form of "democratic racism" (Henry & Tator, 1994), meaning that these White preservice teachers espoused both democratic ideals and discriminatory inclinations. These White teacher candidates' ideological incongruence was maintained through "several coping mechanisms such as recentering the focus of the discussion, focusing on the perceived difficulty that whites have experienced, and trivializing different sources of information..." (Solomon et al., 2005, p. 157).

These White teacher candidates negotiated White capital: 1) by using a range of emotional responses "from outright anger and aggression towards the author and minorities in general to a sense of guilt" (Solomon et al., 2005, p. 157); 2) by appealing to individual efforts rather than institutional effects; and 3) by refusing to acknowledge "how white people are implicated in relations of social domination and subordination and instances of economic exploitation. There is a continued investment in ensuring the continued invisibility of whiteness" (Solomon et al., 2005, p. 159).

Finally, liberalist notions of individualism and meritocracy were evidenced by "three highly prevalent attitudes within liberalist discourses; discounting of the effects of racism, the

focus on the individual, and the continued ‘pathologizing’ of minority families” (Solomon, 2005, p. 161). The stage is set for such attitudes by choosing ahistorical narratives, ignoring systemic dynamics, and leaving meritocracy and individualism unquestioned.

Ultimately, the White preservice teachers in this qualitative study not only held common sense notions of race, they also demonstrated elaborate, complex commitments to sustaining the White superordinate ideology that typically accompanies conceptualizing race as common sense. As the second decade of the 21st century comes to a close, it appears that teachers’ conceptualizations of race have changed, but not as much as we might expect when compared to the 1900s and perhaps not in the ways that racial justice advocates would hope (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

In sum, we have more than 100 hundred years of evidence with which to characterize teachers’ conceptions of race in American schooling, using methods like discourse analysis, document analysis, case studies, interviews, and surveys. This body of evidence suggests that common sense notions of race are pervasive and persistent among American teachers. Taken together, this selection of scholarship characterizes how teachers have conceptualized race from 1900 to today in U.S. schools. However, it remains unclear how teachers’ conceptions of race are evident in their instruction (e.g. inform/influence teachers’ instructional practices, selecting materials, assessment, etc.).

Studies in literacy and education report that instruction falls along racial lines in some classrooms. For example, Mertzman (2008) reported that teachers’ literacy interruption patterns differ according to students’ racial group. Rowe (1986) reports that a longer wait time for student responses gradually improves teachers’ expectations for minority students. Haller (1985) found

that teachers form student reading groups according to “other attributes,” including race, when “reading ability criteria failed to yield a clear choice” for grouping (p. 479). In the literature on differential treatment, Babad (1993) found that teachers practiced differential behavior toward high- and low-expectancy students and toward student “types”: “A type is characterized by a unique constellation of attributes, with a succinct stereotypic label which is widely held and which has consensual meaning (e.g., jock, clown, hippie, etc.)” (p. 364-365). Racial “types” of students fit this definition from the literature on teachers’ differential treatment.

Studies of race that align with Babad’s finding about student “types” include Chang & Demyan’s (2007) study of teachers’ stereotypes of Asian, Black, and White students wherein they found statistically significant differences in the attributes teachers linked with Asian, Black, and White children. Also, Tettegah (1996) found that White preservice teachers held various “attitudes toward White, African American, Asian American, and Latino student groups depending on whether the dimensions being perceived [according to the *Teachable Pupil Survey*] were cognitive-autonomous-motivational, institutionally appropriate, or personal-social behaviors [of these hypothetical boys and girls in the survey]” (p. 159). Further, Irvine (1986) found that race, sex, and grade level (lower elementary and upper elementary) influence teacher-student classroom interactions. Other studies and reviews echoed the point that teachers’ instruction is not postracial, whether in the U.S. or internationally, which highlights the need to continue examining how identities, identifications, and instructional practice are related (Gloria Ladson-Billings, 2002, 2005; A. E. Lewis, 2011; A. E. Lewis & Diamond, 2015; Murrell, Jr., 2009; Nasir, 2012; Nasir, Snyder, Shah, & Ross, 2012; O’Connor, Hill, & Robinson, 2009; Van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010; Wortham, 2005). Currently, it



remains unclear how such racialization of instruction occurs *in situ* (O'Connor, Hill, Robinson, 2009).

All of this suggests that literacy teachers' instructional practices may fall along a dynamic continuum of race conceptualization from common sense to consequential social practice. Thus, over time teachers may understand race according to a common sense conceptualization, a consequential social practice conceptualization, perhaps both conceptualizations at one point or another, or even other conceptualizations (Johnston, 2014). In turn, each of these understandings may influence literacy instruction involving students who are identified as racially Black.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem and Significance**

Despite longstanding, sophisticated theorization of race outside the field of education and literacy, O'Connor, Lewis, & Mueller (2007) report, "race has been undertheorized in contemporary education research" (p. 541). Since in their review, their descriptions of the ways that race is (under)theorized—as either a variable or as a culture—is also reflective of contemporary literacy research, the un(der)theorization of race is the first problem of this study.

The problem of undertheorizing race in education and literacy research is significant because it is typical for researchers to perpetuate the common sense (or hegemonic) conceptualization of race (i.e., race as naturally "real," self-evident, as a human attribute, as a variable, as a culture, as neutral, simplistic, automatic, universal, biological, essential) as they employ or evade the construct of race in their research.

The second problem in this study is that students raced as Black or African American continue to be un(der)served by school educators (i.e., teachers, administrators, board members),

a series of education policies and literacy curricula or lack thereof (Dyson, 2003; Edmondson, 2002), and the economic-political landscape of the U.S. (Anderson, 2007; Gloria Ladson-Billings, 2006). Despite this unsupportive circumstance, Black children are striving to develop multiple, valued literate practices, including literacy skills, to advance themselves academically, in labor, and in leisure (Heath, 1985).

Un(der)serving Black children as they strive to develop multiple, valued literate practices is significant because children raced as Black are incontestable heirs of the accumulated human knowledge that began in Africa (Diop, 1974, 1981) particularly ways of meaning through language. Their literate lives—the inseparable mutuality of literate enactments and lively human plentitude—are invaluable. In short, the problems in this study are: un(der)theorizing race and un(der)serving children who are raced as Black.

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because theorizing race as consequential social practice (as consequential D/discourse), rather than as an unexamined social fact (as common sense), makes it unnecessary for school educators to continue to conclude that race is simply a pre-existent attribute of Black students, their parents, or their communities that, in turn, can itself delineate social worth, aesthetics, morality, intelligence, capability, predilections, motivation, behavior, background experience, ambition, values, identity, or any other human characteristic. This shift moves school educators toward a nuanced, intersectional, more individualized view of Black students while making more explicit the variety of ways that humans establish social group membership (Appiah, 1986). Importantly, these ways of establishing group membership include

language practices such as bidialectalism (Harris-Wright, 1999; B. Z. Pearson, Conner, & Jackson, 2013).

Also, theorizing race as consequential social practice in this investigation foregrounds the fact that in order for race as common sense to persist in the classroom, teachers (and students) must consent to participate in the status quo of White superordinate racialized order—an order that has existed since Western Europeans invented this sociopolitical order during the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment period that followed (Da Silva, 2007; H. L. Gates, 1986; Happe, 2013; Mills, 1997; Puzzo, 1964; Stuurman, 2000). Rhetoric scholar Kelly E. Happe (2013) defines consent to participate in the status quo as follows: “For consent to be achieved, performative discourse *must* transform the action of the subject (complicity with the status quo) to an attribute of the object (the racial body)” (p. 148; emphasis in original). In other words, when the common sense conceptualization of race persists in instruction, teachers’ race-producing actions are guised as some pre-existent, natural human attribute. Teresa Guess (2006), citing Berger & Luckman (1967), made the point in the field of sociology: “As part of a socially constructed and symbolic universe, American ‘race’ relations represent ‘historical products of human activity . . . brought about by the concrete actions of human beings’ (1966:116)” (p. 656). These two examples from Happe (2013) and Guess (2006) illustrate how I have used the literature beyond the field of education and literacy to define race as a D/discursive, active, ongoing, sociopolitical construction that may have implications for teaching and learning literacies.

Further, perhaps the results of this literacy study will help teachers and students in the U.S. to dissent from conceptualizing race as common sense, thereby dismissing race as a natural

attribute, and consent to conceptualizing race as consequential social practice. If this occurs, it should not lead to postracialism, colorblindness, or to a view of any kind that sees the world through a raceless lens (e.g., Leonardo, 2013). Ours is not a raceless world and it is not likely to become a raceless world anytime soon. Ours is a world wherein humans consequentially and perpetually produce race for human ends in sociopolitical relations—relations that, for most, appear natural. Rather than the pathway of postracialism (e.g., Leonardo, 2013), understanding race as consequential social practice should lead to the pathway of post-White (superordinate) orientation or multicriticalism, whereby the human plentitude (Taubman, 1993) of each person is radically recognized and regarded, in living color, by critiquing every defacing “ism” and system (Wildman & Davis, 2000) that would disregard any aspect of a person’s humanity (Grosfoguel, 2013; hooks, 2000; Paris, 2012; Razfar & Rumanapp, 2014; Woodard, Vaughan, & Machado, 2017; Wynter, 2006). To be clear, the post-White orientation or multicriticalism (Croom, 2016b) is defined as a racial understanding and practice characterized by: (a) unequivocal regard for “nonWhite” humanity, especially “Black” humanity; (b) demotion of “White” standing (i.e. position, status); (c) rejection of postracial notions; (d) non-hierarchical racialization; (e) anticipation of a post-White sociopolitical norm.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

This study was designed to answer the following research question: How is teacher conceptualization of race evident in literacy instruction?

I focus on literacy instruction and Black children because persons raced as Black in the U.S. today have the incomparable adversity of “double duty” (Brandt, 2001; Walker, 2011), that is, the adversity of responding to the vestiges of authorized legal, social, and practical exclusion

from participation in valued literate practices on one hand, while responding to the unrelenting demands of worldwide social, economic, and communication shifts on the other (Anderson, 1995; Belt-Beyan, 2004; Brandt, 2001; Cornelius, 1992; McHenry, 2002; Catherine Prendergast, 2003; Williams, 1883). The double duty of developing multiple, valued literate practices and literacy skills among persons raced as Black is the historical and current endeavor to “keep up even while...being kept down” (Brandt, 2001, p. 110).

As a sponsor of literacy (Brandt, 2001), some schooling in the U.S. has been effective in disrupting the systematic depravity of authorizing the exclusion of persons raced as Black from participating in and developing valued literate practices (Anderson, 1995; Flood & Lapp, 2005; Hoover, 1978b; Hoover et al., 1990; Spring, 2010). School-sponsored literacy instruction, then, is a promising process that can serve as an ideal access point for children raced as Black to master multiple, valued literate practices. Further, school-sponsored literacy instruction is also a promising situation for investigating how conceptualizations of race are manifest through instructional practices across situations that involve children raced as Black (Allington, 1983; Haller, 1985; Irvine, 1986; Lleras & Rangel, 2009; Mertzman, 2008; Murrell, Jr., 2009; Van den Bergh et al., 2010).

The purpose of this study is to answer the following question: How is teacher conceptualization of race evident in literacy instruction?

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE

### 2.1 Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I will review the four key race frameworks and discuss two newer race frameworks that have been used in education research, provide a perspective on how race is (not) engaged in literacy research, and review a set of 24 studies that have addressed literacy instruction and race. These 24 studies have been selected through a keyword search of the *Journal of Literacy Research*. In comparison to other research journals (i.e., *Reading Research Quarterly*), the *Journal of Literacy Research* yielded the most promising body of literature relevant to literacies, race, and instruction—the keywords used in my archival search. I took this approach to selecting studies because journals usually reflect what a field regards as ‘the core’ of its work (Parsons et al., 2016; Ray Reutzel & Mohr, 2015).

#### 2.1.1 Race in Education Research

Zeus Leonardo (2013) has reviewed the four key approaches to race that have been used in education research. His book, *Race Frameworks: A Multidimensional Theory of Racism and Education* is the most current, comprehensive single volume that reviews approaches to race in education research (Croom, 2016a).

Education research has approached race through Critical Race Theory, Marxism, Whiteness Studies, and Cultural Studies. To be sure, there may be other approaches to race in the archival literature, but these four approaches characterize the research in the field of education. Following, I will discuss each of these four frameworks according to what they contribute to our understanding of race and what they fail to contribute. As Leonardo argues, each framework has

its own limitations. Nonetheless, by considering one limited framework alongside another limited framework we gain a fuller toolkit for investigating race in education.

In *Race Frameworks: A Multidimensional Theory of Racism and Education*, Leonardo (2013) reviews and critiques four race frameworks that are broadly used in education research: Critical Race Theory, Marxism, Whiteness Studies, and Cultural Studies. Following a thorough discussion of each throughout the book, Leonardo also offers a final chapter titled “Race Ambivalence and a Multidimensional Theory of Racism and Education.” I include this book in my review of the education literature not only because it summarizes the extent to which race is theorized in education research, but also because after reviewing these four major race frameworks in education, he concludes with the question that my theorization of race begins to answer: “What is race?” (p. 156). As Leonardo (2013) puts it, “without [asking this primary question in race analysis] race analysis proceeds commonsensically rather than critically” (p. 156). This suggests that his entire book, after a review and critique of the four main frameworks of race in education, has not already answered this question, or at least has not adequately done so. To this end, the final chapter of his book

serves as the culminating appraisal for the book insofar as it attempts to introduce a new framework for the study of race and education. Synthesizing the insights from the previous [four] paradigms, I argue for a Multidimensional Theory of Race and Education, at the heart of which is an appeal for *race ambivalence*. (p. 10)

Leonardo’s book, then, actually covers five frameworks—Critical Race Theory, Marxism, Whiteness Studies, Cultural Studies, and (Leonardo’s own newer framework) Multidimensional

Theory of Racism and Education<sup>1</sup>. I will summarize the contributions and constraints of all five of the race frameworks that Leonardo (2013) sets forth.

### *Critical Race Theory*

CRT in the field of education is called Critical Race Theory in Education (CRT in Ed). This scholarly movement was launched in 1995 with an article by Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate titled “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education.” Right from the beginning of CRT in Ed, as this article shows, the problem of race being “untheorized” is the focus. Since this inaugural work, only a little more than twenty years ago, countless publications and presentations have been offered to the education field.

Leonardo reviews the framework of Critical Race Theory by discussing each part of its moniker. According to Leonardo (2013), CRT in Ed is “critical” to the extent that “criticality produces political effects” (p. 14). From this standpoint, CRT in Ed names the structured racial oppression that exists in education. This naming brings to the fore historical events and processes; global, national, group, and personal practices; and the urgency of demystification. As Leonardo points out, “...CRT proponents prefer to name the process in the most direct way

---

<sup>1</sup> I am aware of the slide from “race” to “racism” in the title of Leonardo’s newer framework, but it is not a typo (of mine anyway). Perhaps Leonardo’s view that race is inherently White supremacist racism explains the slide. As Leonardo (2013) argues, “race without racism simply would not be race as we know it. In all likelihood, it would be a society without race” (p. 153). This suggests something like the following: race=racism=White supremacy. I disagree with this kind of equivalence. I argue that from an historical perspective, the psychological tool of race was exploited by the orientation that is Whiteness (Nasir & Hand, 2006; Stuurman, 2000; Warmington, 2009; Nonetheless, Jackson & Weidman (J. P. Jackson & Weidman, 2004) suggest that gender and value judgments were “built into the race concept from the beginning” [p. 14]. At this point, I’m not convinced that “value judgments” is the same as “Whiteness”). This argument aligns with other historic trends of exploitation which occurred because of the orientation that is Whiteness—which is not limited to what Leonardo terms “White bodies” (p. 155; see also Mills, 1997).



possible” (p. 15). In CRT in Ed, the urgency of demystification is fueled by racial realism, a term coined by Derrick Bell (1992). For Leonardo (2013), “Racial realism is a perspective that attempts to apprehend actual race relations, while avoiding the negativity of ideology critique and the positivity of utopian thinking. In colloquial terms, it is what it is” (p. 18). To the extent that political effects can be produced by demystification and racial realism in the field of education, CRT in Ed is “critical.”

When it comes to the “race” portion of CRT in Ed, there is no doubt that race (as everyday violence, social construct, narrative, formation, intersectional) is the central focus. However, Leonardo (2013) critiques the amorphous use of the term “race” in CRT:

If race is indeed the privileged center, [the meaning of race] is more often assumed than fully worked out. If this impression is correct, the lack of consensus about the meaning of race is not as worrisome as the lack of in-depth explanation concerning its usage. This is a problem not merely of definition but about setting conceptual parameters and analytical clarity. (p. 28)

Sharing Leonardo’s worry, I embrace CRT in Ed but offer a definition of race in this study to avoid the pitfall about which he warns us. Unfortunately, however, Leonardo (2013) does not himself offer a definition of race beyond what he mentions in his argument for Race Ambivalence: “As a modern principle, race is a particular grouping of individuals into social groups” (p. 163). To contribute to the field, I define race in this study as consequential social practice. This definition provides the conceptual parameters and analytical clarity that Leonardo calls for in CRT and the field of education.

The “theory” in CRT in Ed suggests that “racism is not only a practical problem but an intellectual one” (Leonardo, 2013, p. 22). In fact, CRT in Ed emerged (Gloria Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995) in response to multiculturalism as “the mainline race critique” and in response to “the limitations of a class-focused analysis of education in confronting the problem of racism, specifically White supremacy” (p. 23). According to Leonardo (2013), not even a critical study of education is adequate to theorize race:

At the level of theory, race receives short shrift within a critical study of education. [Race] is important but not central, dominant but not determining, and ideological rather than real. That race becomes the stepchild of class may be considered a conceptual form of White supremacy at the level of theory. (p. 24)

As this suggests, CRT in Ed arose to address a theoretical lacuna in the field of education. Through these efforts to theorize race (Haney-Lopez, 1994) and racism, a number of perspectives have developed, including: critical race pedagogy (Lynn, 1999), TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2005), and Chicana Cultural Studies in Education (Villenas, 2010), and critical race praxis (Yamamoto, 1997, 1999).

Leonardo (2013) was interested in the relationship between CRT and Marxism, namely class and capital. Marxism has been around for a long time and has been an effective way of demystifying some human oppressions. Nonetheless, Marxism centers the economy, leaving race as a secondary issue, if an issue at all (e.g., ideological). While a Marxist approach to racism, according to Leonardo (2013), is very hesitant to borrow from CRT, critical race theorists are willing to take full advantage of the tools that Marxism has developed.

Unlike Marxism, or its educational cousin, Critical Pedagogy, which has had a tepid love affair with race analysis, CRT does not have an ambivalent relationship with class analysis, although [CRT] maintains a healthy suspicion about Marxism. Because [CRT] is a discourse led by scholars of color in education, who in general understand that racism is a function of economic strife, CRT has developed race and class insights alongside each other. (p. 35)

As Leonardo (2013) states more simply, CRT incorporates Marxism without losing its racial center: “Class is seen through racial eyes” (p. 35). An important example of how CRT makes use of Marxist tools is the concept of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977).

### *Marxism*

When race is approached from a Marxist perspective, material relations and ownership of the means of production are centered. Thus, class analysis (e.g., capitalist, proletariat) is primary, with race analysis being a derivative form of class analysis. From a Marxist view, the basis and driver of human history is economics. Race is but an immaterial tool or ideology in the game of economics used to divide classes with shared interests, to advance capitalist agendas, or to simply misinform and mystify.

From a Neo-Marxist view of race, there are two levels to consider: historical materialism (base) and culture (superstructure). Race belongs to the superstructure of society, but the superstructure (including race) can influence the base (the economic game) and the inverse. Where both Marxism and Neo-Marxism is concerned, Leonardo (2013) explains

Marxism in education recognizes the awesome influence of racialization. But from a scientific vantage point, if not also from a strategic position, [Marxism]

recommends economic analysis and organizing around labor struggles. Over and beyond “race’s” suspect conceptual status, economics not only explains more accurately the real process of wealth accumulation and dispossession of people of color, but it captures quantitatively more people’s objective interests that are not served by capitalism, obscured by racism, and confused by “race” analysis. (p. 60)

Thus, the Marxist view of race does not center race. This is precisely the critique that Leonardo raises about Marxism. According to Leonardo (2013),

As a lived experience, displacing race with class invalidates

- The microaggressions (Kohli & Solorzano, 2012) and daily assaults (Ladson-Billings, 1998) that minority students and educators suffer.
- The lack of human recognition that makes it possible to treat them as disposable people (Bales, 1999).
- The structures that enable their marginalization in mundane affairs, such as affording them human decency (hooks, 1996), as well as large-scale disenfranchisement from governance, such as the right to vote and when they vote, the right to be counted. (p. 64)

In the end, we learn that Marxism is a great aid in understanding racialized experience, but that it is insufficient to account for race and racism.

### *Whiteness Studies*

As Leonardo (2013) explains, “Whiteness Studies has helped educators focus on the contours of racial privilege, or the other side of the race question that has long been neglected. Rather than the usual, ‘What does it mean to be a person of color?’ it asks, ‘What does it mean to

be White in U.S. society?’” (p. 83). This alternative question is important to consider because racial hierarchy is relational. There is no “bottom” without the “top.” Arguably, the shift in focus from nonWhites to Whites in race theorization holds more promise where demystifying White superordinate racialization is concerned. Leonardo (2013) is right to compare W.E.B. Du Bois’ question in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), “How does it feel to be a problem?” (focus on nonWhites) with the concern of Whiteness Studies, “How does it feel to be *the* problem?” (focus on Whites). With the turn to examine Whiteness comes the need to be critical of Whiteness, to name and mark Whiteness as a racial category, to particularize Whiteness (rather than allowing Whiteness to be universal and normative), to formulate a response to Whiteness in sociopolitical experience, and to consider the intended and unintended consequences of shifting the focus from nonWhites to Whites, especially in education research. As this begins to indicate, Whiteness studies is a welcome addition to the work of racial justice, but it has important limitations. For example, Leonardo (2013) points out that the “discovery” paradigm, which is so typical of Whiteness, rears its ugly head again epistemically by ignoring or appropriating the work of Black scholars who have interrogated Whiteness for over 100 years. Also, to what extent do Whiteness studies scholars, largely racially White, sideline racially nonWhite scholars in the work and scholarship of racial justice? From this perspective, once again, nonWhites would be missing among the heroes of humanity. Thus, Whiteness Studies is a necessary, but insufficient approach to race in education research.

### *Cultural Studies*

“A Cultural Studies approach to race broadens its appeal from the study of languages, such as English, Spanish, or bilingualism, to the general linguistic environment of education”

(Leonardo, 2013, p. 115). As such, both meaning and language are the focus of race theorizing. From this perspective, race is a field of representation that is simultaneously created and contested. Representations, whether written or unwritten, are never established, once-and-for-all. Representations are made, remade, unmade, and even *not* made, over times and places. In education, “every educational interaction takes on some form of representation: from history, to literature, to art” (Leonardo, 2013, p. 117). Science and math are no less forms of representation. Also, representations are related. “In fact, race is relational par excellence; it works only through the intimacy of difference. Representations of White and Black depend on each other, whereas being Laotian does not depend on the history of Luxembourgnians” (Leonardo, 2013, p. 119). As this approach suggests, from school, to curriculum, to talk, race is made in education through representations and relations. Discourse is a key medium of race production, whether such discourse makes race in critical or uncritical ways within processes of schooling.

As with all of the aforementioned race frameworks, Cultural Studies, as robust as it is as an approach to race, has its limitations. For example, Leonardo (2013) raises that postmodern theory, which is at the core of Cultural Studies, cannot respond to material aspects of race that exist. “The dialectical tension between discourse and materialist theories of race is productive, but the “end of the real” thesis is unsustainable and, at worst, complicit with relations of exploitation” (p. 138). As a result, discursive theorization must be fused with material theorization of race. Leonardo (2013) discusses Althusser’s (1969) framework of how the “superstructure and base produce overdeterminations” to argue for an explanation for the production of raced subjects:

Ideological apparatuses, like schools, induct students into their places within [capitalist] production and race relations by first inserting them into discourse. As far as Althusser emphasizes the base as the first cause, he is materialist, and as far as he eternalizes ideology, he is poststructural. Through discursive practices, racial subjects (mis)recognize their imaginary relations to the real for their real relations. *In other words, discourse is a form of representation of the real and not the real itself.* (p. 142; emphasis original)

As this suggests, discourses have material consequences and material circumstances influence discourses. When this is applied to race, one could say that race is discursive with material consequences, among other kinds of consequences. Said differently, and well within a Cultural Studies approach to race without its postmodern shortcomings, race is consequential D/discourse—or stated more simply, race is consequential social practice (Bernasconi, 2001; Bourdieu, 1977; Gee, 1999; Haney-Lopez, 1994; Holland et al., 1998; Mirón & Inda, 2000; Pascale, 2008).

#### *Newer Frameworks: Post-Race Thinking vs. Post-White Orientation*

In the final portion of Leonardo's book, where his multidimensional theory of racism and education is offered, Leonardo (2013) is careful to set the parameters of his "post-racial project" (p. 146) as "post-race thinking as a form of *aspiration* rather than a description of society as it exists" (p. 146). He stated that he intends to "wrestle the concept [of post-raciality] away from its common-sense use" (p. 146). In short, his "task at hand is to ask questions about the possibility of a "post-racial project" (p. 146).

Additionally, Leonardo (2013) explains that he prefers:

the concept of ambivalence over the usual and helpful construct of racial contradictions because the former [ambivalence] allows educators to establish some distance from the naturalness of race, its seeming permanence, which is the first step in making its familiarity appear strange. (p. 146)

Accordingly, Leonardo (2013) argues that ambivalence is a form of post-race thinking and that, defined as such, post-race thinking is “precisely the opportunity that affords educators the space to move race pedagogy into a different direction” (p. 146). So how, then, does Leonardo characterize “post-race thinking”?

According to Leonardo (2013), “post-race is intimate with post-White discourses” (p. 156) in that post-White, as he offers it, means that Whites should not be urged toward awareness of White or Whiteness. He exclaims, “Whites know they are White and do not need to be made aware of this first fact” (p. 155). Rather, “Whites must now forgo their Whiteness, disavowing it before they can even own up to it” (p. 156). Further, as Leonardo defines it, post-race “is not only an intellectual project but equally political, conceptual on one hand but actional on the other (see Fanon, 1952/1967)” (p. 158). As he sees it, post-race is also “the ability of race theory to become self-aware and critically conscious of its own precepts” (p. 159). In other words, post-race thinking obligates one to take “a hard and sometimes difficult look at race theory” itself (p. 159). Additionally, Leonardo argues,

To the extent that raciology introduced White subversion of humanity inhered in people of color, post-race represents the attempt to subvert the subversion, to negate the negation. Race changed some subjects into people of color; it may be time to change again. (p. 162)



This suggests that the “post-race project,” as Leonardo (2013) characterizes it, bears resemblances with what I term as the post-White or multicritical orientation (Croom, 2016b). The post-White or multicritical orientation, as I define it,<sup>2</sup> is precisely this: a metaphoric return to, and literal vindication of (Drake, 1987; Hoover, 1990), multi-hued, mutually regarded humanity (Wynter, 2006); critical restoration of persons *from* the ravages of misrepresentation and mishandling *to* proper regard as persons always already fully human. The post-White or multicritical orientation is a potential antidote for Western Europeans’ invention of White superordinate race and the consequences of White superordinate racialization (Croom, 2016b; Grosfoguel, 2013; Puzzo, 1964; Stuurman, 2000). The similarity of post-race, as Leonardo characterizes it, and post-White or multicritical orientation, as I characterize it (Croom, 2016b), is even more striking when Leonardo concludes his argument with a discussion of hope:

Post-race analysis is the recognition that the language of race has been necessary in order to understand what we have made of race and what [race] has made of us. But race is ultimately insufficient and shows its weakening grip over us. Post-race opens up ambivalence in our search for [and our abiding hope for] a more humanizing language and a humane material condition” (p. 166).

Consonant with this, in unpublished work (Croom, unpublished), I have argued that a post-White turn is due at any moment, if not already occurring, which aligns with the “weakening grip” of White superordinate racialization suggested by Leonardo. The vindicationist tradition (Drake, 1987), although Leonardo does not precisely acknowledge it, is the tradition of hope that persons

---

<sup>2</sup> Post-White orientation defined (Croom, 2016b): A racial understanding and practice characterized by: unequivocal regard for “nonWhite” humanity, especially “Black” humanity; demotion of “White” standing (i.e. position, status); rejection of postracial notions; non-hierarchical racialization; anticipation of a post-White sociopolitical norm.

who are raced as Black, and other people of color, have relied upon to light the pathway forward through the “conditions of grief” (p. 165) that race as consequential social practice has produced. As I read Leonardo (2013), then, his multidimensional theory of racism and education bears resemblances with what I term as the post-White or multicritical orientation. Therefore, beyond the four frameworks that currently characterize education research on race, Leonardo’s post-race framework and my post-White framework (Croom, 2016b) are two newer possibilities for theorizing race in research.

### *Limitations of Leonardo’s Post-Race Thinking*

Importantly, however, there is a fundamental difference between Leonardo’s post-race project and my post-White project. Without restating the full argument that I have written elsewhere (Croom, in preparation; “Race Defined: A Contribution to Critical Race Theory, Education, Literacy, and Other Fields”) suffice it to point out here that Leonardo does not dissent from all hegemonic, common sense notions of race, including allegations that the body corroborates race as a social fact. One clear example evidences this point. In his discussion of Whites and Whiteness, Leonardo (2013) assumes equivalence between the body and race:

After all, it is difficult to imagine White racism without the prior category of race that is responsible for White *perception* concerning which groups deserve a blessed or banished life. The challenge for Whites is to unthink their Whiteness because race trouble arrived at the scene precisely at the moment when White bodies began thinking they were White people. (p. 155; emphasis original)

In this excerpt, we see Leonardo consent to the common sense notion that there are “White bodies” that helped create the idea of “White people.” Such thinking perpetuates the common

sense conceptualization of race as biological and self-evident. In fact, there is no race in human bodies. Rather, human bodies are appropriated in the thought and practice of race. This is precisely the point that sociologist Celine-Marie Pascale (2008) makes in her study when she finds that common sense conceptions of race include contradictory ideas about color:

although race was talked about [among her interviewees] as differences in skin color, the logic of race as visible differences in skin color did not rely on color per se—not all differences, or similarities, in color were racialized differences. This is possible because, like all racial markers, color is not the property of bodies—that is, White people do not have white skin any more than Black people have black skin (cf., Frankenber, 1997; Gilroy, 1993; Hall, 1991).” (p. 727)

In sum, Leonardo (2013) perpetuates the common sense conceptualization of race in his newer post-race project.

If Leonardo’s post-race project consented to race as consequential social practice and entirely rejected race as common sense, his theorization of race and its aims would be much harder to distinguish from mine. This fundamental difference between post-race and post-White—namely, dissent from all notions of race as common sense and consent to race as consequential social practice—is illuminated by the following question: *Can humans eliminate all past and present forms of race production, locally and globally, and maintain such a halt indefinitely?* At least two possibilities could be argued,

On one hand, if one concludes that we can, post-racialism, however it is reasoned, becomes advisable (and I recommend Leonardo’s brand of post-racialism because it is the best version that I know of). On the other hand, if one concludes that we

cannot, developing racial literacies<sup>3</sup> becomes advisable because race production persists among humans. Where racial literacies are concerned, the project is not to end race; rather, the project is to regard and support human plentitude amid and despite the thought and practice of race, whether race production occurred in the past, is occurring in the present, or may occur in the future (Taubman, 1993).

With racial literacies, we critically produce, engage, and transform uncritical race production (see also Pollock, 2004, p. 214). For example: Who produces race? When? How? Why? What are the results of the race production(s) in question? When is race production ethical? When is race production unethical? How can racially White superordinate thought and practice be discredited, demoted, and dismantled? How can racially Black (or non-White) subordinate thought and practice be discredited, outmoded, and dismantled? Space does not allow me to further explain racial literacies here, but other publications are in progress and will become available in the near future. (Croom, in preparation)

In short, because Leonardo's post-race project does not fully reject race as common sense and define race as consequential social practice, his project misses the point. The point is not ending race (it appears that we cannot). Rather, the point is nurturing and regarding human plentitude amid relentless race production. All of this suggests that race is still

---

<sup>3</sup> Racial literacies defined: the critical, human cultural toolkit, developed after the invention of race, that supports human well-being amid the social thought and practice of race (i.e. the human creation and consumption of race); enables the reading, critiquing, and rewriting of race. This term and definition synthesizes and expands the construct "racial literacy" according to my own research and the various uses found in archival literatures. For example, see Guinier, 2004; Horsford, 2014; Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Sealey-Ruiz, 2011; Skerrett, 2011; Stevenson, 2014; Twine, 2004.

un(der)theorized in the field of education and that this study is situated at the growing edge of theorizing race in education research.

*Race is Still Un(der)theorized in Education Research*

Lamentably, and despite longstanding, sophisticated theorization of race outside the field of education and literacy, O'Connor, Lewis, & Mueller (2007) argue, "race has been undertheorized in contemporary education research" (p. 541). What they concluded over a decade ago also applies to literacy research, as will be discussed later. O'Connor et al. (2007) report, particularly where students discursively raced as Black are concerned, that two major traditions have addressed themselves to race as a social category in research: the race-as-culture tradition and the race-as-variable tradition (p. 541).

In the first instance, while noting exceptions to their general conclusion, O'Connor et al. (2007) find that the race-as-culture tradition is limited by

what Michaels (1992) refers to as the 'anticipation of culture by race' (p. 677).

That is, we [researchers] presume that 'to be Navajo you have to do Navajo things, but you can't really count as doing Navajo things unless you already are Navajo' (Michaels, 1992, p. 677). Although we must substitute *Black* for *Navajo* in this instance, the effect is the same. Such anticipation reifies race as a stable and objective category and links it deterministically to culture. (p. 542)

Relatedly, Pascale (2008) finds that common sense notions of race allege that race is one's culture, rather than human cultural. O'Connor et al. (2007) go on to explain that "Black" as heterogeneous, intersectional, and dynamically meaningful (at least both in students' meanings

of “Black” and in school imposed meanings of “Black”) are all lost in such a limited, underconceptualized rendering of race.

In the second instance, while reviewing key examples, these authors explain that the scholars in “this [race-as-variable] tradition often collapse conceptually the statistical relationships they document between race and the moderating variable under study” (p. 542). In short, “being Black functions as a conceptual proxy for something else (i.e. biology or culture)” (p. 542). Citing Bonilla-Silva (2001), they conclude that both of these traditions, race-as-culture and race-as-variable, converge by biologizing culture (p. 542; Appiah, 1986, p. 36).

In their call for future research, O’Connor et al. (2007) include:

(a) theoretical attention to how race-related resources shape educational outcomes, (b) attention to the way race is a product of educational settings as much as it is something that students bring with them, (c) a focus on how everyday interactions and practices in schools affect educational outcomes, and (d) examination of how students make sense of their racialized social locations in light of their schooling experiences. Such studies will continue to unveil how schools produce race as a social category. (p. 546)

The current study is designed to contribute answers to item “(b)” by investigating race production in the literacy instruction that is carried out in a Midwestern university literacy practicum.

### *Antecedent and Current Race Theorization*

Current theorization of race is a blossom from seeds of insight that were planted and nurtured over a century ago. According to Kirt H. Wilson (1999), William Edward Burghardt Du

Bois' (1903, 1999) book *The Souls of Black Folk* is "an incipient articulation of contemporary theories of race" (p. 209). As Wilson (1999) found, Du Bois'

text shifts from a study of what race is to a study of *what race means*. Du Bois accomplishes this shift through direct analysis of the South's problems, by a critical practice that synthesizes art and reason, and through a methodology that focuses on the lived experiences of individuals and communities. Du Bois's key concepts – the veil of race and double-consciousness – not only invert the claims of biological determinism, but they also move toward a discursive theory of race. (p. 209; emphasis added)

Current theories of race, including my own, are deeply indebted to the research and writing of Du Bois.

However, W. E. B. Du Bois' (1903, 1999) *The Souls of Black Folk* is not only the origin for discursive theories of race, his work, according to Sherrow Pinder (Pinder, 2012), is also the starting point for Whiteness Studies. After noting William J. Wilson's 1860 essay "What Shall We Do With the White People?," Pinder (2012) clarifies that "the first-wave of 'whiteness studies,' emanating from W. E. B. Du Bois to Toni Morrison, has named and classified the 'problem' [referring to the unstated question from which Du Bois begins *Souls*] as that of whiteness, a system of domination" (p. 99). Second-wave whiteness studies, a late blossom that followed the tilling, sowing, watering, sunning, and tending of first-wave Whiteness Studies, emerged in the 1990s in the work of David Roediger, Ruth Frankenberg, Mike Hill, and many others. As Pinder (2012) emphasizes, "In other words, the second wave of 'whiteness studies' is not new in naming whiteness, 'as an essential something,' and in engaging 'in a process of

redefinition, reclassifying and dedifferentiating that which always and already exists” (p. 117). Nonetheless, it is the case that the term “whiteness studies” first appeared in Liz MacMillan’s fall 1995 article “Lifting the Veil of Whiteness: Growing Body of Scholarship Challenges Racial Norm.” Even later, third wave whiteness studies purports to having opened up a “new line of research and analyses of racisms and racial formation” (Twine & Gallagher, 2008 as cited in Pinder, 2012 p. 100).

It is important to note, though, that according to Alastair Bonnett (1996) and Sherrow Pinder (2012), contemporary Whiteness Studies “has been inclined to defend an ‘uncritical, a-historical, common-sense, perspective on the meaning of whiteness’” (p. 118). This suggests, therefore, that some research in contemporary Whiteness Studies perpetuates race as common sense and thus does not theorize race as consequential social practice.

A pioneer of the Cultural Studies approach to race, preeminent race scholar Stuart Hall (1997), as reported in Mirón and Inda (2000), explains that a fundamental practice of race as common sense is to naturalize the human cultural racialization of the “other.” Hall writes, “If the differences between black and white people are ‘cultural,’ then they are open to modification and change. But if they are ‘natural’—as the slaveholders believed—then they are beyond history, permanent and fixed” (p. 245). His distinction between natural and cultural aligns with the distinction that Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) makes between natural (elementary) psychological processes and cultural (higher) psychological processes (Brice-Heath, 1985), as well as with the conclusion of current science: there is nothing natural about race, race is a human cultural matter. Race should neither be theorized as natural, nor is empirically defensible as natural. Race is best understood as sociohistorical experience derived from meaningfully



situated practice. Accordingly, Louis Mirón and Jonathan Inda (2000), described racial naturalization, a cultural practice that is unique to and ubiquitous in human history since the Enlightenment (Mills, 1997; Puzzo, 1964; Silva, 2007; Stuurman, 2000), this way: “Indeed, it amounts to the familiar practice of locating difference in the presocial realm, of locating difference in nature as part of nature, and hence rendering it immutable” (p. 86).

Contrary to racial naturalization, Mirón and Inda (2000) argue that humans use performative discourse (which includes “written documents, speech, ideas, concrete practices, rituals, institutions, and empirical objects” [p. 101] that are meaningful in a given context) to *produce race*, which is merely one of the always multiple constitutions or positionalities of subjects, through an iterative “never ending process” of “discursive constitution” (p. 93). But this discursive constitution can only “bring about what it names through citing [or iterating] the conventions of authority” (referencing Judith Butler, 1993, p. 94). This citation of the conventions of authority involves citing it “as such a norm, but also derives its power through the citations that it compels ([Butler,] 1993a, p. 13)” (p. 94). Over time, these repeated discursive constitutions can appear to be natural, when in fact they are merely a “naturalized effect” (p. 94).

But the necessity of authoritative repetition to constitute the subject is simultaneously the possibility to reconstitute the subject against hegemonic convention. Mirón and Inda (2000) urged,

The upshot is that the reiterative process, the process of infinite repeatability through which a subject is produced, opens up that subject to redeployment, to being constituted otherwise. Thus, to think of the subject through performativity,

calls our attention to those constitutive instabilities that contest the naturalizing effects of discourse. (p. 95)

In other words, by the same process in which race is naturalized, race can be denaturalized and exposed as a human cultural practice.

In sum, (White superordinate) racialization can be theorized as “racial performativity” (Mirón and Inda 2000, p. 103); that is, as a great chain of consequential D/discursive processes (or consequential social practices) wherein an utterance, “in the very act of uttering, retroactively constitutes and naturalizes the subjects to which it refers” (p. 103). As such, racial performativity (like gender performativity), also

brings to our attention those constitutive instabilities that challenge the naturalizing [and White superordinate] effects of discourse. There is not guarantee, of course, that subversion will ensue from the reiteration of constitutive norms, but at least there is hope. (p. 103)

With a hopeful theorization of race in hand, namely race as consequential social practice rather than as common sense, we now turn to characterizing literacy research with regard to race.

## **2.2 Literacy Research and Race**

In literacy research, Hinchman & Lalik (2001) have argued that race is avoided. While their article was published over fifteen years ago, there is evidence that race is still not as widely engaged as other matters in literacy research. Notable exceptions to this trend include the work of Mary Rhodes Hoover (Hoover, 1978a, 1978b, 1990), Hoover and Marsha Fabian (1996) Rudine Sims Bishop (1990), Arlette Ingram Willis (2015), Dorothy Strickland (1994, 2002), Patricia Edwards (1992), Carol Lee (2000), Valerie Kinloch (2010), Marcelle Haddix and Detra

Price-Dennis (2013), Catherine Prendergast (2000), Rebecca Rogers and Melissa Mosley Wetzel (2006), Anne Haas Dyson (2003), Catherine Compton-Lilly (2006), Ernest Morrell (2008), David Kirkland, Stuart Greene and Dawn Abt-Perkins (2003), Shawn Robinson (2014), and Alfred Tatum (Tatum, 2009), to mention only a few literacy scholars. These scholars unapologetically include a racial lens toward literacy and acknowledge the (helpful and harmful) consequences of racialization in their work. Their scholarship also suggests that Black children have multiple literacies which should be developed.

In this section, I give extended attention to an article by Hinchman & Lalik (2001). I do so because they offered a helpful description of how the field of literacy research has historically responded to race critical literacy research, despite the substantial race critical scholarship beyond the field of literacy and by many within the field of literacy. Hinchman & Lalik (2001) critiqued the field of literacy research and called for work that would undermine the status quo that they termed “White liberalism” in literacy research. As mentioned above, a review of the literacy research literature suggests that O’Connor et al.’s (2007) characterization of education research also fits literacy research. Lalik & Hinchman (2001) have characterized literacy research and their conclusion suggests that race is not only theorized as variable or culture in our field—that is as common sense—but also that even the common sense approach to race is often muted.

After beginning their discussion with Toni Morrison’s (1992) warning about the “dangers and risks attendant to discussing race openly,” Lalik & Hinchman (2001) explain, “in our experience, open discussions of race in literacy research are typically met with resistant responses, including boredom, distraction, defensiveness, ridicule, and anger” (p. 530).

Breaching this scholarly taboo of literacy research, these “white liberals,” as Lalik & Hinchman (2001) identify themselves, “conclude that silence about race with respect to our research is a misguided strategy” (p. 530). But what brought on this open discussion over 15 years ago? Lalik & Hinchman (2001) lament,

The circumstance is this: Even in the face of assertions that research-based knowledge about teaching literacy continues to evolve (Langenberg & Associates, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), there is persistent evidence that literacy, as defined and operationalized within most schools, remains problematic for many children in the United States. This phenomenon [sic] is especially apparent among children from traditionally oppressed groups (Gee, 1999; Hilliard, 1988; Lomotey, 1990; Mathes & Torgesen, 2000; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). (p. 530)

This circumstance is precisely the one that Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) described in her published AERA Presidential Address about the education debt owed to children who are raced as Black in U.S. schooling. Incidentally, since her widely circulated 2006 AERA Presidential Address, Ladson-Billings has more recently called for “Justice...Just, Justice!” in her 2015 AERA Social Justice in Education Award acceptance speech ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofB\\_t1oTYhl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofB_t1oTYhl)).

Reflecting some degree of a D/discursive understanding of race, Lalik & Hinchman (2001) described the “authors of most published literacy research in the United States [as] people of European American descent,” (p. 530) which is not a common sense raced description.

Continuing, however, they explain, “many of these researchers, like us [Lalik & Hinchman], enact subject positions as white liberals – a perspective within which race plays an important role” (p. 530). This further description presents “white liberals” as race production rather than common-sense racialization. Their framing suggests that the demographics of American literacy researchers itself begins to characterize the published literature where race is concerned. My interpretation is borne out by their preview: “In this review, we foreground a perspective that suggests ways in which a white liberal stance actually can obstruct a researcher’s ability to act in ways that would improve the situation [described above] for all children” (p. 530). So before they even characterize the literature of literacy research, then, we can already see the consequences of race as social practice in American literacy research; namely that those who are not D/discursively enacted as “white liberals” are largely absent from the process of producing this body of knowledge, and thus are silenced. With Ladson-Billings’ addresses and widely reported statistics which stratify American students’ literacy achievement in mind, this raises questions like whether the silencing of those who are not raced as “white liberals” spans from Kindergarten to career and whether literacy research is impoverished when it lacks the voices of persons raced as nonWhite.

Within their survey of the literature on race and racism in education, Lalik & Hinchman (2001) point out that race as a variable alone cannot explain school literacy performance any more than some other single variable. “Nevertheless, racial identity remains a significant identifier for people in the United States where ‘class- and gender-based explanations are not powerful enough to explain all of the difference (or variance) in school experience and performance’ (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 49)” (p. 531-532). This suggests that when race

is not adequately analyzed in literacy research, especially in investigations of school-sponsored literacy, the findings will be distorted and deficient.

Following their survey of race and racism in education, Lalik & Hinchman (2001) problematize White liberalism. They accurately acknowledge a number of positions and interventions that “we [White] liberal literacy researchers have supported [with the optimism that these would] yield change in the social order” (p. 535). As we know all too well, however, despite White liberal “hopeful common sense,” which is better described as “persistent optimism,” (p. 535)—a distinction Leonardo (2013) also makes—“Children from oppressed groups continue to struggle with school literacy acquisition and development” (p. 535). Lalik & Hinchman (2001) argue that White liberal optimism “contrasts sharply with the less sanguine views of those scholars working from alternative and more radical perspectives, such as critical race theory” (p. 535). I cannot overstress that these “scholars working from alternative and more radical perspectives” have generated a wide-ranging literature within literacy research since 1995, the year that critical race theory in education was inaugurated. These scholars’ work, however, was often positioned as interesting compliments to “the core” of literacy research, if their work was regarded at all by the field of literacy research, rather than core literacy research.

According to Lalik & Hinchman (2001), citing Sleeter (1996),

the liberal practices we [White liberal literacy researchers in the U.S.] have pursued have interfered with racial justice, exacerbating problems of racism for racial “others” and legitimating “the social order by offering the illusion of significant activity” (p. 42). That is, because of our faith in the efforts that we

have made and because of our insensitivity to the continuing violence of racism, sustained in part by our white privilege, we lack both the commitment to understand and the insight to combat the fundamental dynamics of racism. (p. 535)

In other words, they suggest that the “illusion of significant activity” makes it possible to have a flourishing literacy research literature and yet little impact that disrupts the literacy consequences of being sociopolitically raced as Black, whether these raced as Black students in America are middle class or poor, masculine or feminine<sup>4</sup> (Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015; Gosa & Alexander, 2007; Gloria Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995; S. Lewis, Casserly, Simon, Uzzell, & Palacios, 2012; Long, Kelly, & Gamoran, 2012; Muhammad & Haddix, 2016; Ricks, 2014; Schott Foundation, 2015; Smith-Evans, George, Graves, Kaufman, & Frolich, 2014). Lalik & Hinchman (2001) go on to explain how this has occurred in the field of literacy research:

Thus, we have generally avoided scholarship aimed at contextualizing schooling within broader institutional power relations, typically characterizing such scholarship as helpful though nonessential, or, as Morrison warned in our opening quotation, as just “too political” to be considered good research. Our research has, in large measure, overlooked problems of materialism, competition, and individualism; systems of power within which human behavior is produced; and collective struggles over power and wealth that could provide insights about ways of reducing continued inequity. As Sleeter and McLaren (1995) argued, we have

---

<sup>4</sup> I create this parallelism to symbolically acknowledge that women are not yet paid equally when compared with men counterparts.

participated in constellations of actions and inactions that conspire against our intentions to eradicate racism. On the surface, we celebrate difference – even though, through judgment and practice, we uncritically preserve a racist hierarchy in which “white Anglo-European values...serve as the invisible referent” (p. 14), including the referent for literate activity and success. (p. 536)

As Lalik & Hinchman (2001) argue, those who are not D/discursively positioned as White liberals are not only silenced in the process of generating literacy research, but they are also undermined by the literacy research and instruction enterprise itself. For example, students who are D/discursively raced as Black according to racial common sense do not benefit from literacy research that fails to contextualize, in the ways mentioned above, their reported literacy performance. Further, the implicit and explicit White superordinate hierarchy, enshrined in uncritical literacy research and instruction, harms students who are discursively raced as Black by perpetuating the lie that being literate is synonymous with being White. The truth is that being multiply literate is the human inheritance of persons raced as Black or African American, despite the social facts invented by Western European philosophers, like Hume, Kant and Hegel, which claimed that Black persons were incapable of literacy and literate practice (Heath, 1985; Gates, 1988).

To expound on this point, it is noteworthy that the origins of the currently assumed relationship between literacy (i.e., writing and reading) and race has been traced to the beginning of seventeenth century European thought (Gates, 1986). Henry Louis Gates, Jr. details,

Since the beginning of the seventeenth century, Europeans had wondered aloud



whether or not the African “species of men,” as they most commonly put it, *could* ever create formal literature, could ever master “the arts and sciences.” If they could, the argument ran, then the African variety of humanity and the European variety were fundamentally related. If not, then it seemed clear that the African was destined by nature to be a slave. (p. 8; emphasis in original)

Thus, the persisting association between literacy and race, and the White superordinate assumption that inferiorizes Black persons where both of these are concerned, is nothing new in Western culture and imagination (Grosfoguel, 2013; Willis, 2015).

Continuing to revisit Lalik & Hinchman (2001), in the next section of their article they detail four “oppressive patterns” that they see among “white liberal literacy researchers” and the research artifacts they create (p. 536): “Blaming the Victim,” “Whiteness as the Unraced Standard,” “Silence,” and “Unwillingness to Implicate Ourselves.” After discussing each along with relevant literature, Lalik & Hinchman (2001) critique two examples of their own literacy research in light of the four White, liberal oppressions they identify. Following this, they call for literacy researchers to take action by “critiquing our epistemology” and “openly talk[ing] about race and other systems of oppression as they relate to children’s lives,” namely by conducting literacy research that “looks at race as a factor in school-literacy teaching and learning” (p. 554). Also, they call for examination of “the processes through which conceptions of literacy become constricted, defined, measured, and experienced in U.S. schools and how arguments about literacy have been reduced to arguments about method” (p. 555), like whole language vs. phonics (P. D. Pearson, 2004) or experimental research designs vs. non-experimental research designs, for example. This examination includes questioning “what might constitute school

literacy (Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000)” (p. 555). Ultimately, Lalik & Hinchman (2001) call racially White liberal literacy researchers to recognize their own “complicity in racist dynamics” and they appeal for “anti-racist research practice as a viable alternative to continuing in that complicity” (p. 557). A number of other articles and books could have been discussed in this section, but I elected to revisit Lalik & Hinchman (2001) in depth to characterize how the field of literacy research has historically (not) come to grips with race. Hence, there remains a need for race critical literacy scholarship.

### **2.2.1 Literacy Instruction and Race**

Within the field of literacy, there is research that addresses literacy instruction and race (or at least the literacy classroom and race). Generally, this research is focused either on “urban” or non “urban” contexts. Tatum & Muhammad (2012) use the term “characteristically urban” to explain that “urban” has “become synonymous with predominantly African American or Latino populations from lower-middle- to lower-class communities besieged by violence and other illicit behaviors primarily committed by male youth of color” (p. 436). In other words, “urban” is typically used as a racial description of schools and school districts, when in fact “urban” should be a topographical description of schools and school districts. With this racial connotation of “urban” demystified, it makes sense of the finding that “urban” schools (racially Black or racially nonWhite spaces) are discussed more often in the literature when students who are facing literacy problems are the focus. To be clear, “urban” students’ purported race, per se, is not the source of these children’s literacy problems (purported race cannot determine the capacity of humans to carry out literate practices). Rather, “urban” students’ literacy problems are among a constellation of consequences arising from the multi-leveled thought and practice of

race in America over time (which includes assigning races), from the macro- to the micro-level of their human experience.

Of course, “urban” students develop multiple literacies, but let’s focus on print literacies here, specifically reading. According to Pierce, Katzir, Wolf, and Noam (2010), “Although struggling readers can be found in even the most well-funded schools, reading failure more commonly occurs among poor children, minority children, and children whose native language is not English (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)” (p. 126-127). The obvious question is: Why are reading difficulties, even in the absence of reading disabilities, so common among these U.S. students? As they explain, “Such reading difficulties can be caused or exacerbated by a number of factors, including biological deficits, poor instruction, and paucity of home literacy practices (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)” (p. 126). But a closer consideration of how reading difficulties differ from reading disabilities makes it clear that there are significant voids in literacy instruction research. Consider the following from Pierce, et al. (2010),

In recognition of the multiple factors contributing to delays in the development of skilled reading, urban children are often characterized as displaying *reading difficulties*, as opposed to reading disabilities. The term reading difficulties represents a broader construct, including children who would typically be excluded from the category of reading disability: children whose difficulties are caused or compounded by environmental factors such as poverty, English proficiency, and quality of instruction. If we are to understand reading failure in urban settings, children whose reading difficulties are associated with environmental factors must be included in educational research. (p.133)

In other words, “urban children” are generally able to read (again, “race” itself cannot determine the capacity of humans to carry out literate practices). The (under examined) problem is that an “urban child’s” literacy ability and efforts are generally frustrated and undermined by difficulties that the students themselves appear not to have created.

Pierce, et. al (2010) report about this problem of under examining the literacy difficulties of “urban children.” As they explain,

Despite the pressing need for comprehensive research on the specific reading difficulties exhibited by populations served by urban schools, much of the research on reading disabilities has focused on samples who show a significant discrepancy between aptitude (as measured by performance on intelligence tests) and reading proficiency, and whose reading difficulties cannot be explained by environmental factors. Indeed, this methodology results in the disproportionate exclusion of racial- and language-minority children from participation in cognitive-behavioral studies of reading disability. As a result, we are only in the beginning stages of learning about how race, SES, and language proficiency interact with cognitive development in influencing the reading trajectories of urban children (Washington, 2001). (p. 127).

As Pierce et al. (2010) report, not only is the research on the *reading difficulties* of “urban children” in dire need of development (e.g., environmental factors), this knowledge void stands in relationship with the substantial research that has been amassed about *reading disabilities*—studies in which many “urban children” rightly are not included because they are not reading disabled. Further, such reading disabilities research privileges a cognitivist, individualized view

of literacy problems. As a result, reading difficulties that are environmentally driven are either inadequately examined on one hand (i.e., the “urban” child), or intentionally ignored on the other (i.e., the “disabled” child).

Mindful of the broader landscape of literacy instruction research that focuses on “urban children,” I found 24 studies from the *Journal of Literacy Research* that characterize the literature on literacy instruction and race since 2001, just a few years after CRT was established in the field of education. Interestingly, in 2006 Lesley A. Rex (2006) published “Acting ‘Cool’ and ‘Appropriate’: Toward a Framework for Considering Literacy Classroom Interactions When Race is a Factor.”

Rather than separately reporting on each of the 24 studies, I have elected to describe the key convergences that I found after creating an analytic chart of these studies. I have also included a table that lists all 24 studies.

**Table 1. Core Studies from *Journal of Literacy Research***

	Core Studies
<b>1</b>	Hinchman, K. A., & Young, J. P. (2001). Speaking But not Being Heard: Two Adolescents Negotiate Classroom Talk about Text. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 33(2), 243–268. doi:10.1080/10862960109548111
<b>2</b>	Smith, M. W., Strickland, D. S., Carman, J., Dover, D., Fiegenbaum, B., Hess, R., ... Temperini, R. (2001). Complements or Conflicts: Conceptions of Discussion and Multicultural Literature in a Teachers-as-Readers Discussion Group. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 33(1), 137–167. doi:10.1080/10862960109548105
<b>3</b>	Fairbanks, C. M., & Broughton, M. A. (2002). Literacy Lessons: The Convergence of Expectations, Practices, and Classroom Culture. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 34(4), 391–428. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3404_2

4	Ares, N. M., & Peercy, M. M. (2003). Constructing Literacy: How Goals, Activity Systems, and Text Shape Classroom Practice. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 35(1), 633–662. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3501_4
5	Möller, K. J. (2004). Creating Zones of Possibility for Struggling Readers: A Study of One Fourth Grader’s Shifting Roles in Literature Discussions. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 36(4), 419–460. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3604_1
6	Sutherland, L. M. (2005). Black Adolescent Girls’ Use of Literacy Practices to Negotiate Boundaries of Ascribed Identity. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 37(3), 365–406. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3703_4
7	Assaf, L. C. (2005). Exploring Identities in a Reading Specialization Program. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 37(2), 201–236. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3702_4
8	Dozier, C. L., & Rutten, I. (2005). Responsive Teaching Toward Responsive Teachers: Mediating Transfer through Intentionality, Enactment, and Articulation. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 37(4), 459–492. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3704_3
9	van Sluys, K., Lewison, M., & Flint, A. S. (2006). Researching Critical Literacy: A Critical Study of Analysis of Classroom Discourse. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 38(2), 197–233. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3802_4
10	Rex, L. A. (2006). Acting ”Cool” and ”Appropriate”: Toward a Framework for considering Literacy Classroom Interactions When Race is a Factor. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 38(3), 275–325. doi:10.1207/s15548430jlr3803_2
11	Triplett, C. F. (2007). The Social Construction of “Struggle”: Influences of School Literacy Contexts, Curriculum, and Relationships. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 39(1), 95–126. doi:10.1080/10862960709336759
12	Boyd, F. B., & Ikpeze, C. H. (2007). Navigating a Literacy Landscape: Teaching Conceptual Understanding with Multiple Text Types. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 39(2), 217–248. doi:10.1080/10862960701331951
13	Lazar, A. M. (2007). It’s Not Just about Teaching Kids to Read: Helping Preservice Teachers Acquire a Mindset for Teaching

	Children in Urban Communities. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 39(4), 411–443. doi:10.1080/10862960701675291
14	Handsfield, L. J., & Jiménez, R. T. (2009). Cognition and Misrecognition: A Bourdieuan Analysis of Cognitive Strategy Instruction in a Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Classroom. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 41(2), 151–195. doi:10.1080/10862960802695172
15	Christianakis, M. (2010). “I Don’t Need Your Help!” Peer Status, Race, and Gender during Peer Writing Interactions. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 42(4), 418–458. doi:10.1080/1086296X.2010.525202
16	Pierce, M., Katzir, T., Wolf, M., & Noam, G. (2010). Examining the Construct of Reading among Dysfluent Urban Children: A Factor Analysis Approach. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 42(2), 124–158. doi:10.1080/10862961003796140
17	Chisholm, J. S., & Godley, A. J. (2011). Learning About Language Through Inquiry-Based Discussion: Three Bidialectal High School Students’ Talk About Dialect Variation, Identity, and Power. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 43(4), 430–468. doi:10.1177/1086296X11424200
18	Lazar, A. M., & Offenber, R. M. (2011). Activists, Allies, and Racists: Helping Teachers Address Racism Through Picture Books. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 43(3), 275–313. doi:10.1177/1086296X11413720
19	Collin, R. (2012). Genre in Discourse, Discourse in Genre: A New Approach to the Study of Literate Practice. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 44(1), 76–96. doi:10.1177/1086296X11431627
20	Vetter, A. (2013). “You Need Some Laugh Bones!”: Leveraging AAL in a High School English Classroom. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 45(2), 173–206. doi:10.1177/1086296X12474653
21	Dutro, E., Selland, M. K., & Bien, A. C. (2013). Revealing Writing, Concealing Writers: High-Stakes Assessment in an Urban Elementary Classroom. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 45(2), 99–141. doi:10.1177/1086296X13475621
22	Wright, T. S., & Neuman, S. B. (2014). Paucity and Disparity in Kindergarten Oral Vocabulary Instruction. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 46(3), 330–357. doi:10.1177/1086296X14551474

23	Scarbrough, B., & Allen, A.-R. (2014). Writing Workshop Revisited: Confronting Communicative Dilemmas Through Spoken Word Poetry in a High School English Classroom. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 46(4), 475–505. doi:10.1177/1086296X15568929
24	Aukerman, M., & Chambers Schuldt, L. (2015). Children's Perceptions of Their Reading Ability and Epistemic Roles in Monologically and Dialogically Organized Bilingual Classrooms. <i>Journal of Literacy Research</i> , 47(1), 115–145. doi:10.1177/1086296X15586959

### Convergence 1: Philosophy

Across these studies, philosophy was not discussed. This is unsurprising, but nonetheless problematic (Paul & Marfo, 2001; for discussion of epistemology and reading see Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996). This is especially problematic when literacy research involves Black children. According to Mary Rhodes Hoover (1990), there are two basic worldviews with which researchers and school educators approach Black children and other nonWhite learners: deficiency philosophy and vindicationist philosophy. In an unconventional article, published in *American Behavioral Scientist*, Hoover (1990) heralds the “vindicationist philosophy” in relationship to her literacy research and in contrast with “deficiency philosophy,” which she characterizes as

the view that the genes, language, history, and/or cultures of Black and most other people of color are deficient in some way due to cognitive deficit, inferior genes, childlike intelligence, worthless ethos/worldview, dialect/language simplicity, low self-concepts and attitudes, nonsubstantive ideas, lack of ability to think for themselves, or [due to] exotically different, almost nonhuman folkways or learning styles. (p. 251)



In categorical opposition to the deficiency philosophy of Black persons, Hoover (1990) urges,

A second philosophy, vindicationist, [that] considers Blacks to be as capable of academic achievement as any other students. This model is based on the vindicationist perspective that Drake (1987) endorsed, that is, that we must adopt a positive perspective on people of color. The model is research-based and contends:

1. Students of color have the ability to acquire lower-to-upper levels of literacy as well as or better than any other students—from preschool to the college level—if taught.
2. Students of color come from cultures that have made vast contributions to world civilization.
3. There are strengths in the current cultures of people of color.
4. There are strong values in the cultures [of people of color] that endorse education, self-esteem, and fearlessness. (p. 256)

As we can see, Hoover applies vindicationist philosophy to contemporary literacy education, and to the contemporary field of literacy research, on behalf of Black children. In contrast with the 24 studies I have reviewed, this present literacy study explicitly names the philosophical stance of the researcher: vindicationist philosophy.

#### Convergence 2: Theory

Unlike philosophy, theory was routinely and explicitly discussed in these studies. Sociocultural and critical theories were most prominent among a number of theoretical perspectives. For example, sociohistorical (including ZPD and ADL), social constructivist,

CHAT, situated learning, semiotic apprenticeship, communities of practice, reader response, critical literacy, Gee's theory of D/discourses, social positioning, and poststructural subjectivity. In the present study, I also chose the Vygostkian approach to human development (Vygotsky, 1978) and Gee's theorization of D/discourse (Gee, 1999, 2015).

### Convergence 3: Methods

Qualitative methods dominated across these studies. However, quantitative methods were also included in this set of studies. Observations, recordings, interviews, field notes, case study, collection of artifacts, discourse analysis, and other ethnographic tools characterize these studies. Due to the nature of the question I ask, in this study qualitative methods are the primary tools for data collection and analysis.

### Convergence 4: Literacy Instruction

Across these studies, literacy instruction involved sponsors of literacy (Brandt, 2001), such as teachers, classrooms, and schools. Thus, most of these studies focused on schooled as opposed to non-schooled literate practices. Grade levels ranged from kindergarten to high school and focused on students, teachers, and teacher preparation with regard to literacy instruction. Literacy instruction was directed to reading and writing, but discussion was also an important aspect of teaching and learning. Teacher identity, teacher identifications of students, student identity, peer relations, classroom culture, literature selection, teacher characteristics (e.g. preparation, expertise, instructional goals), and the social construction of learning for teachers and students were among the findings related to instruction. In the present study, I expected these reported findings to play some role in the literacy instruction carried out between the study participants.

## Convergence 5: Race Production

These studies report that race production—the thought and practice of race—occurs among researchers, teachers, and students. For example, Hinchman & Young, 2001 argue that “teachers and researchers will want to attend to their own enactments of our culture of difference. We should be vigilant as to how our own interpretations are driven by our race, class, or gender to determine our complicity in others’ silencing, unintended though it may be” (p. 265). This means that racial differences (among others differences) are thought and done, rather than self-occurring among teachers and researchers. Also, Ares & Peercy (2003) point out,

Another fertile arena for research focused on mutually constitutive relations between structure, activity and text involves investigating more thoroughly who gets what type of opportunity in terms of the day-to-day routines of the classroom. Such work would involve data and analyses that illuminate the ways in which opportunity to participate emerges related to teachers’ perceptions of students’ and groups of students’ abilities, about what kinds of knowledge and skills are treated as legitimate, and about student-teacher interactions. (p. 659)

This suggests that teacher identifications of students, including racial identifications, are one of the constitutive elements of the opportunities students receive in literacy instruction. Sutherland (2005) speaks more directly to this by saying

Yet, in education research, to fail to consider the role of race and gender in the lives of participants is to behave as though such constructs do not have meaning in the ways in which curriculum is written or classroom pedagogy is enacted. (p. 367)

Where students are concerned, van Sluys, Lewison, & Flint (2006) report that students “believed that a person’s racial or cultural heritage is not always visible, that hair is often a marker of racial or cultural difference, and that minority groups are often presented with images that privilege European American standards of style” (p. 221). As you may recall from above, the assumption that human hair is a feature of race indicates a natural, biological, common sense conceptualization of race.

These are only a few examples of how I noted race production across the 24 studies. Beyond the complex examples given, simple racial labeling also occurred in the studies (e.g. White girl). Thus, in simple and complex ways, these 24 studies suggest that race production was likely to occur in the present study.

In closing, the review of Pierce, et al. (2010) that I mentioned above lead to a study that “offers a closer look at the factor structure underlying reading performance among second and third grade urban children with reading difficulties, a key age range before the transition from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” (Chall & Jacobs, 2003)” (p. 128).

### 3. METHODS

This multiple case study was designed to answer the following research question: How is teacher conceptualization of race evident in literacy instruction? In other words, how was teachers' racial ideas and identifications evidenced by their own talk and identities, narratives, rationales, planning, teaching, reflecting, and so on, when instruction involved Black children in the elementary grades? In this chapter, I discuss the qualitative case study design, the methods of data collection, and the approach to analysis needed to answer this research question.

#### 3.1 Theoretical Framework

This investigation was theoretically framed by the family of sociocultural theories, specifically Lev Vygotsky's (1978, 1997) cultural-historical theory of mind and human development, also called "non-classical psychology" (Robbins, 2007). Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory informed this entire investigation of teachers' race conceptualization when carrying out literacy instruction with Black children.

In *Vygotsky's Legacy: A Foundation for Research and Practice* (Gredler & Shields, 2008) the authors emphasize that Lev Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory of cognitive development maintained that the relationship between environment and personal characteristics was one of unity. Vygotsky warned against subdividing the complex whole of human cognition and he also warned against such divisions of the complex whole that is the child and the environment. "Vygotsky used the Russian term *perezhivanie* to reflect this unity," the authors explain (p. 156). They go on to clarify that "Van der Veer and Valsiner (1994, p. 354, note 1) stated that the term was used to convey 'the idea that one and the same objective situation may be interpreted, perceived, experienced, or lived through by different children in different ways'

(p. 354)” (p. 156). While this aspect of Vygotsky’s work is rarely discussed, it is a vital element of his cultural-historical theory. Consider, at length, the following:

Lacking a comparable term in English, the editors [of earlier books] used the term *emotional experience*, which, [Van der Veer and Valsiner, 1994] indicated, only addresses the affective and not the interpretive, rational aspect of the relationship [between environment and child]. For Vygotsky (1935/1994), *perezhivanie* is “a unit where, on the one hand, in an indivisible state, the environment is represented,...and on the other hand, what is represented is how I, myself, am experiencing this [the environment]” (p. 342). In other words, experience is a unity of the environment, or situational characteristics, and the individual’s personality, or personal characteristics (p. 342). This unity is key to understanding individual differences in development. (p. 156; emphasis original)

From a cultural-historical theory of development and learning, a group of Black children can all be in the same environment, at the macro or micro level, and differ in their individual *perezhivanie* or “experience,” or even in their *smysl* or “sense” of the situation. This aspect of individuality, which Vygotsky insisted on preserving in his theory, explains how it is possible for Black children to be in the same environment and yet differ in development and learning from one another. In a simple word, individual Black children are, and always have been, *human*.

Non-classical psychology has also revolutionized how literacy is defined today. After the cultural turn occurred in literacy research, the traditional notion of literacy, of itself, conferring special cognitive powers upon the literate was overturned. Literacy was no longer a singular thing that one had or lacked, and thus was literate or illiterate. The sociocultural perspective of

literacy has demonstrated that there are multiple literacies constituted by meaningfully situated social practices: print, screen, academic, indigenous, youth, old, new, or racial<sup>5</sup>—to list a few of these literacies. Thus, I define literacies as meaningfully situated language practices using any mode—whether unwritten or written, old or new.

This cultural-historical theory of mind and human development not only informed my orientation toward Black children's lives, Black children's learning, and my definition of literacies, it also helped my race theorizing. I developed a practice theory of race by drawing upon race scholarship both beyond and within the field of education. Yet, I also saw Vygotsky's premise that culture becomes internalized as a fitting explanation of how and why humans began, and continue to, practice race. Once human culture invented and included race, physical and psychological tools were used to cumulatively generate the human culture of race practice—including race-based hierarchy and race-based harms. Humans learn to use of all sorts of physical and psychological tools while we are situated in the ongoing human cultural practice of race. Again, race is not natural or primordial, humans did—and still do—race ourselves, for good or ill.

Race is a human cultural practice which has developed through various modes since its invention in Western Europe during the 1600s. According to Stuurman (2000), François Bernier invented the classifications of race which have since become common sense in modernity.

---

<sup>5</sup> Racial literacies defined: the critical, human cultural toolkit, developed after the invention of race, that supports human well-being amid the social thought and practice of race (i.e. the human creation and consumption of race); enables the reading, critiquing, and rewriting of race. This term and definition synthesizes and expands the construct "racial literacy" according to my own research and the various uses found in archival literatures. For example, see Guinier, 2004; Horsford, 2014; Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Sealey-Ruiz, 2011; Skerrett, 2011; Stevenson, 2014; Twine, 2004.

Contrary to the common sense view of race, race is attributed to human biological features and human experience through human accumulated physical and psychological tools. Therefore, race is not a biological or natural phenomenon. Accordingly, I bring to this study a practice theory of race wherein race is a culturally produced, consequential, multimodal practice situated within macro-, meso-, and micro-levels<sup>6</sup>. The practice theory of race allowed me to have an empirical, race critical approach to identifying and investigating race.

Having established that Black children are, and forever have been, human since humanity began on the continent of Africa (Diop, 1974, 1981), and having established my theoretical standpoint—that Black children develop and learn according to Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory (Feuerstein, Feuerstein, & Falik, 2010; Vygotsky, 1987, 1997) and that race is consequential social practice (Croom, 2016a)—I now discuss the design of this study and the philosophical stance that informed this investigation.

### **3.2 Case Study Design**

#### **Qualitative Case Study**

This study was designed as a qualitative, multiple case study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994, 1995; Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2014). Because my study involved children who were raced as Black, I state explicitly that I entered this case study research with a vindicationist philosophy of human beings who are raced as Black (Hoover, 1990). In education and literacy research, Black children are often regarded at the group membership level (e.g. socioeconomic, linguistic, geographic, racial, average test score, etc.) but are less frequently

---

<sup>6</sup> I have been aided by Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (2005) and Gordon Wells’ (1994) multi-leveled approaches to theory and research.



considered at the individual level. Qualitative case study is the best way to answer my research question because this method allows generation of detailed individual and group level description of the interaction between Black students and their teachers. Historically (Morgan, 1995) and currently, Black children vary as individual human beings who strive to develop multiple, valued literate practices. This multiple case study of teachers and Black children who are participating in literacy instruction adds to the literature that offers a perspective of Black children as individuals who are being engaged by individual teachers.

Therefore, case study of teachers instructing individual Black children aligns with the vindicationist philosophy of Black human beings, namely: Black persons are fully human individuals and are also members of human groups. Case study is also a promising way to investigate race production, both individually and at the group level. Race talk, use of genres of race, and race events occurring during teacher-student interaction are best captured through qualitative methods.

#### Positionality of the Researcher

In this study, I investigated as a male, Black, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, upwardly mobile, North Carolina native; born to Black, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, working class parents (also from North Carolina) in the 1970s.

All of my college educational experiences have been within Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with the exception of beginning my doctoral studies at University of Illinois at Chicago in 2011. Before pursuing this Ph.D in Literacy, Language and Culture, I was a career teacher of music, with experience from elementary to high school.

I come to literacy research with a Bachelors of Science in Music Education from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, nine years of professional experience in Music Education (K-12), a Masters of Divinity from Shaw University Divinity School, a Masters of School Administration from North Carolina Central University, as well as teacher and principal licensure from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. As a music educator, in 2010-2011, I developed and managed a National Education Association (NEA) grant-funded after school intervention to develop the print literacies and identities of a selected group of 4th grade Black boys. This work continues in North Carolina and has expanded to multiple grade levels under the leadership of a National Board Certified master teacher who is a Black woman.

I did not have any prior history with the teachers who were completing practicum hours at a Midwestern university to earn the credential of a reading specialist.

### **3.3    Setting**

This study occurred within a topographically urban Midwestern university literacy practicum. The university practicum program was located off the university campus in the facilities of a nearby school. The practicum program was embedded within a community summer program for youth which served mostly non-White children, largely Black children. The practicum program was structured within the community youth program because of university-community relationships between the university practicum professors and community activists who shared commitments to social justice and racial justice initiatives. As such, the university literacy practicum was meeting the licensing requirements of the university and a local need of the community. The practicum operated during the university's summer period between the

traditional spring and fall semesters. The practicum schedule was June 14, 2017 to July 9, 2017, Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm (Fridays were used as protected time for “data organization, data analysis, lesson planning, and presentations”). The practicum participants taught elementary-aged children before lunchtime. I chose this university practicum program because it met my site criteria: a university with a reading clinic or literacy practicum program serving elementary-aged, diverse children.

There are, however, other reasons for choosing this setting. This university literacy practicum allowed an investigation that was analogous to a classroom subgroup or dyadic groups of instruction. Also, this setting provided what Stake calls “opportunity to learn,” the most important consideration of selecting cases (Stake, 1994, p. 244). Investigation of subgroups or dyadic groups was consistent with the literature of classroom research and captured some significant insights about the processes of teaching. Further, by conducting this study in a clinical environment, the context was far more controlled and reduced the impact of data “noise” in the investigation (e.g. the impact of school schedules, non-instructional classroom events, etc.). Support for choosing a unit of analysis that is consistent with a classroom subgroup level, rather than the classroom level, is found in the literature of classroom research. According to Barr and Dreeban (1983), the school and the classroom as units of analysis do not adequately capture “educational effects” on learning. As they report,

in the past, where comparisons between school characteristics have shown exceedingly modest effects upon learning, and comparisons between classrooms both modest and inconsistent ones, we have found strikingly large effects on learning that originate in activities taking place in the suborganization of

classrooms: in reading groups. Our evidence suggests that the differences between groups that account for so much learning get averaged out in classroom and school comparisons and as a result the productive events taking place inside schools become obscured. Does this mean, then, that classrooms produce only trivial effects? Not at all. Classroom characteristics might not affect individual learning directly, but rather influence the formation of instructional groups. Group arrangements, not learning, may then be thought of as the value produced by classrooms. (p. 1-2)

I did not investigate learning, but teaching, in this study. The instructional dyads of the literacy practicum allowed a close look at the processes involved with literacy instruction and race production.

As Adelson, Dickinson, & Cunningham (2016) report, focusing on subgroups of students, especially Black students who according to assessments are facing unaddressed literacy difficulties, is more appropriate and promising than only a school-wide approach. Thus, whether in a practicum setting or a school setting, subgroups of students provide promising opportunities in both research of, and intervention in, the development of Black children's multiple literacies.

### **3.4 Participants**

There were four participants in this study. Two teacher-student dyads were included in this investigation after the study was announced. The study was announced to all the graduate students enrolled in the course associated with the practicum hours and to all the children and guardians who were assigned to the participating teachers by the practicum professors.

Recruitment materials targeted less than 10 graduate students, 2 children, and 2 guardians. For example, my IRB approved recruitment document included this explanation:

This study is intended to shed light how literacy teachers think and what they do when they teach children. You are not required to participate in this study in order to a) complete the practicum or to tutor in [practicum] programs; b) be tutored in [practicum] programs; c) allow your child to be tutored in [practicum] programs. Whether you agree to participate or not, your relationship with the university will not be impacted. No one will offer you special consideration for agreeing or refusing to participate in this study.

Additionally, the practicum tutor consent form, which the teachers voluntarily signed, explained the purpose of this study with the following:

This literacy research examines how social identities and social identifications are significant to instructional practice. Social identities include gender, ethnicity, class, race, sexuality, and more. The researcher is trying to learn more about the way literacy teachers think and what literacy teachers do when they are teaching children.

Study participants were recruited from a purposeful sample (Merriam, 1998, p. 66) of master's students who were teaching children in order to complete their clinical hours toward a master's degree and attain the reading specialist endorsement.

Criteria for teacher selection was enrollment in the course associated with the practicum hours and being assigned a student to teach during the practicum. Additionally, the children assigned to these participating teachers were recruited. Criteria for child selection was

enrollment in the practicum program, racial identification as Black by the child or guardian, and assignment to participating teachers. The master's student tutors, the children tutored, and the parents/guardians of the children each provided permission to be included in this study.

Both teacher participants had been teaching for 4 years when they volunteered for this study. Teacher A had experience teaching first through fifth grade. Teacher B had experience teaching kindergarten through eighth grade. Teacher A reported that she had taught reading, writing, and math; whereas Teacher B reported that she had taught "all subjects (English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and even Independent Functioning." Although both had background and licensure in Special Education, Teacher B was currently working as a K-8 reading specialist. While Teacher A described the kind of school(s) where she had worked simply as "public schools," Teacher B described the type of school(s) where she had worked as: "public, private, parochial, neighborhood, urban, suburban, racially mixed, and high income." Both teachers were pursuing certification as reading specialists because their current positions involved them in the work of a reading specialist. Neither Teacher A nor Teacher B expressed interest in administrative school roles, rather they appeared to be interested in teacher leader roles within their schools. On one hand, Teacher A described herself, unprompted, as a "type A" personality. On the other, Teacher B described herself, unprompted, as a "type A-" personality. I found these unprompted self-descriptions noteworthy. As I observed their teaching throughout the practicum, their self-described personalities rung true for me. Both teachers were, indeed, sincere about carrying out good instruction, but they approached literacy instruction very differently with the Black students to which they were assigned.

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

Three instruments were used in this study: teacher digital survey, pre- and post-observation interview protocol (Question Bank and SIT Task), and a semi-structured observation form (see Appendix B). As the situation shifted throughout the study, I modified the instruments and I made judgements about when to use these instruments (i.e., observation form). Question modifications were discussed with the participants, along with why I felt the modification was necessary. These modifications benefitted the data collection process in that the modifications created a more coherent interview experience for the participants. Rigid adherence to the instrumentation and the initially planned use of the instruments would have resulted in loss of data or useless data.

### **3.6 Instructional Sessions/Routines**

The Instruction Sessions were comprised of nine instructional days, scheduled from June 19, 2017 to July 5, 2017. Each instructional day for the elementary aged children enrolled in the university practicum program occurred between 9 am and 12 pm.

The instruction sessions with the elementary aged students occurred concurrently in a large room, which was shared by three practicum teachers and three students. During the instruction sessions, each teacher worked one-on-one with students. Each instruction session, on average, was one hour and 15 minutes. The sessions included rapport building discussions and activities, assessments, games, use of tablet devices and a laptop, projects, reading, dialogue, and writing.

Although there were a broad set of expectations for the university practicum course, the teachers had instructional autonomy based on their diagnostically derived instructional goals.

The following chart captures the lesson experiences that teachers selected for their students:

**Table 2. Examples of Teacher-Developed Lesson Experiences**

<b>Teacher A with Black boy (rising 5th Grader)</b>	<b>Teacher B with Black girl (rising 3rd Grader)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“Get to Know You” activities</li> <li>-Various diagnostic literacy assessments</li> <li>-Creating slime with written directions</li> <li>-Use of tablet device for instruction, digital texts, and an iMovie project</li> <li>-Use of a laptop for instruction and research</li> <li>-Use of student journal for daily check-in and review (journal cover made by student from favorite magazine clippings)</li> <li>-Student read aloud from student selected text at the end of most lessons (book selected from teacher library; i.e. <i>Big Nate</i>)</li> <li>-Use of exit ticket at the end of each lesson</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-“Get to Know You” activities</li> <li>-Various diagnostic literacy assessments</li> <li>-Games</li> <li>-Use of tablet device for games and digital texts</li> <li>-Wall push ups</li> <li>-“Journey” theme with passport for daily student sign in</li> <li>-Girl Power quotes and SARK (Susan Ariel Rainbow Kennedy) <i>Creative Companion</i> readings</li> <li>-Teacher and student read aloud from teacher selected text on various occasions (e.g <i>Press Here, A Light In the Attic, Bink and Gollie, Serravallo’s Reading Strategies Book</i>)</li> </ul>

### **3.7 Data Collection**

Several data collection methods were used for this study. Data were comprised of surveys, interviews, lesson observations, video and audio recordings, images, student work samples, teacher lessons, assessments and reports, research notes and memos. In the tables below, I itemize the data sources, data instruments, data quantity, and tools of data analysis that were used. Additionally, I show a tabulation of memos and notes, images, video hours, and audio hours collected in Table 4. Finally, I list the lessons which were analyzed in Table 5. The lessons analyzed were independently nominated by each teacher participant as their best lessons of the university literacy practicum. Data were collected between June 14, 2017 and January 23, 2018 and is presented in the tables below:



**Table 3. Data Sources**

<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Data Instruments</b>	<b>Data Quantity</b>	<b>Data Analysis</b>
Teacher Digital Survey	Secure Google form; Google Drive	2	Race critical practice analysis
Entry Interview	SIT Task, Interview Protocol, Question Bank	2	Race critical practice analysis
Pre-Lesson Interview	Interview Protocol, Question Bank	18	Race critical practice analysis
Lesson Observation	Postponed use of Observation Instrument to Data Analysis phase	15; Teacher B had 3 student absences: Lessons 1, 6, 9	Race critical practice analysis; Race coding grid
Post-Lesson Interview	Interview Protocol, Question Bank	18	Race critical practice analysis
Exit Interview	SIT Task, Interview Protocol, Question Bank	2	Race critical practice analysis
Video & Audio Recordings	Observation Instrument; MaxApp; GarageBand; V-Note software (version 2.3.1); Digital cameras, mic	62 hrs. 53 min. 57 sec.	Race critical practice analysis
Images	Secure mobile device; MaxApp; Google Drive	207 files	Race critical practice analysis

Memos and Notes	Secure mobile device, laptop, paper; MaxApp; Google Drive	42 items	Race critical practice analysis
-----------------	---	----------	------------------------------------

**Table 4. Data Quantity**

	<b>Memos and Notes</b>	<b>Images</b>	<b>Video Hours</b>	<b>Audio Hours</b>
Pre-Entry & Post-Exit	2	6	0	0
Field Entry Day June 14, 2017	2	1	0	0
Entry Interview Day June 16, 2017	6	4	Teacher A: 49:06 Teacher B: 47:16	1:36:56
Instruction 1 June 19, 2017	2	27	Pre-Post A & B: 18:11 + Lesson A only: 1:43:27	1:05:29
Instruction 2 June 20, 2017	2	26	Pre-Post A & B: 17:12 + Lesson A: 1:25:00 Lesson B: 1:45:23	3:42: 26
Instruction 3 June 21, 2017	6	15	Pre-Post A & B: 33:44 + Lesson A: 1:19:32 Lesson B: 1:50:46	3:22:27
Instruction 4 June 22, 2017	2	27	Pre-Post A & B: 53:00 + Lesson A: 1:17:38 Lesson B: 1:13:00	3:18:51

Instruction 5 June 26, 2017	2	28	Pre-Post A & B: 32:08 (some video loss of A & B; moved to digital cameras rather than MaxApp) + Lesson A: 1:21:58 Lesson B: 1:33:59	2:58:13
Instruction 6 June 27, 2017	4	9	Pre-Post A & B: 1:05:19 + Lesson A only: 1:26:05	3:12:08
Instruction 7 June 28, 2017	3	34	Pre-Post A & B: 53:33 + Lesson A: 1:23:29 Lesson B: 1:31:32	3:03:37
Instruction 8 June 29, 2017	3	27	Pre-Post A & B: 1:37:39 + Lesson A: 1:23:07 Lesson B: 49:18 (late start due to student arrival)	3:52:05
July 4 <sup>th</sup> Weekend	2	0	0	0
Instruction 9 July 5, 2017	2	4	Pre-Post A & B: 39:38 + Lesson A only: 1:21:53	3:30:04
Exit Interview Days July 5, 2017- Teacher A July 7, 2017-Teacher B	2	0	Teacher A: 53:02 Teacher B: 1:22:02	
Member Check A January 23, 2018	1	2	0	1:22:57

Member Check B January 2, 2018	1	0	0	1:10:53
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>Pre-Post: 6:50:24 Lessons: 21:26:07 Entry-Exit: 3:51:26</b>	<b>32:08:57</b>

**Table 5. Lesson Data**

<b>Lesson Data</b>	<b>Teacher A</b>	<b>Teacher B</b>	<b>Cross Cases</b>
Teacher	Lesson 4, 7, 8	Lesson 2, 4, 7	Lesson 4 & 7
Text/Materials	Lesson 4, 7, 8	Lesson 2, 4, 7	Lesson 4 & 7
Student	Lesson 4, 7, 8	Lesson 2, 4, 7	Lesson 4 & 7

Note-taking and memoing occurred throughout the study. Interviews were conducted both during and after the data collection phase to enrich my discourse analysis (Michaels, 1981).

I carried out the investigation as follows: Pre-Instruction Session, Instruction Sessions, and Post-Instruction Session. Across all sessions, a *Teacher Interview Question Bank* was used to recursively improve interviewing throughout data collection.

### **Pre-Instruction Session**

During the Pre-Instruction Session, the *Teacher Digital Survey* was provided to each teacher participant and returned to the investigator by a secure survey database. Additionally, each teacher participant completed the *Pre-1a portion of the Student Identification by Teacher (SIT) Task* on the Entry Interview Day, June 16, 2017. The Pre-1a portion of the SIT Task (see Appendix B) asked teachers to consider students' multiple identities and identify which of these identities were important to their lesson planning for students, especially "diverse" students.

I used the *Teacher Digital Survey* to situate each teacher personally and professionally. I also used this data to help me identify the figured worlds and Discourses according to which teachers might practice. This process of identifying how the teacher was conceptualizing

continued with the *Pre-1a portion of the SIT Task*. This portion of the instrument was designed to capture how teachers identified students for instructional situations.

### **Instruction Sessions**

Once the Instruction Sessions began, each teacher participant completed the *Pre-2a portion of the SIT Task*, provided instruction to a student while I *observed and recorded the lesson*, then completed the *Post-2b portion of the SIT Task*. The Pre-2a portion of the SIT Task asked teachers the following:

E.) Which texts/materials did you pick for this lesson? (Pre-2a)

F.) Why did you pick these texts/materials for this lesson? (Pre-2a)

G.) What did you need to know about [student first name] in order to prepare this lesson?  
(Pre-2a)

H.) After this literacy lesson, how will you know that your instruction with [student first name] was successful? (Pre-2a)

I postponed completing the observation form until I had collected the video recordings.

After observing, taking notes about, and recording the literacy instruction, as a follow up to the initial lesson interview, the Post-2b portion of the SIT Task asked teachers the following:

I.) How did the texts/materials that you picked for this lesson work out today? (Post-2b)

J.) What else do you need to know about [student first name], now that you have taught this lesson? Why? Are there other things that you need to know? Why? (Post-2b)

K.) Do you feel that your instruction with [student first name] was successful today?  
Why? (Post-2b)

I allotted 15-30 minutes for the pre-instruction interview, 60-90 minutes for observation and recording of instruction, and 15-30 minutes for the post-instruction interview. Actual times varied throughout the data collection as shown in Table 4. Near the end of all the instruction sessions, the post-instruction sessions were scheduled with each teacher.

I used the *Pre-2a portion of the SIT Task* and the *Post-2b portion of the SIT Task* to understand how teachers' identifications of students was linked with their instructional plans, text and material selection, teacher rationales, or other thoughts and practices these teachers evidenced. After collecting the video recordings of each lesson, I used the *Instruction Observation Form* to capture race production during instruction in the form of race talk, genres of race, or race events. To simplify my coding, I collapsed race talk into the labeling genre of race.

### **Post-Instruction Session**

During each post-instruction session, each teacher participant completed the *Post-1b portion of the SIT Task*, which followed up on the initial opportunity that teachers had to consider students' multiple identities and identify which of these identities were important to their lesson planning for "diverse" students (i.e., the Pre-1a portion of the SIT Task). Across instruction sessions, I considered that teachers' identifications of students might change. I anticipated that such changes might be linked to instructional practice shifts as well.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

For this study, I analyzed 6 of 15 lessons. These six lessons were selected by independent teacher nomination. Each teacher was asked to nominate three of their best lessons. Survey

responses and interviews were also analyzed with these teacher nominated lessons to triangulate within and across these multiple cases.

Stake (1995) suggests that analysis of cases requires that each researcher, “through experience and reflection...find the forms of analysis that work for him or her” (p. 77). For these two cases, I selected social interactional or microethnographic analytic approaches to carry out race critical practice analysis.

### Microethnographic Discourse Analysis

Microethnographic discourse analysis was used to analyze patterns, themes, and interaction across the survey responses, interviews, and observational data. Bloome and Carter (2014) specify that:

people act and react to each other; and they do so within a social context constructed by how they and others have been acting and reacting to each other over time. The primary, but not exclusive, means by which people act and react to each other is with language and related semiotic systems. Inherent to this perspective is the inseparability of people and their uses of language within the social events and social contexts of their interactions. (p. 3)

Interaction in context, the way that people act and react to one another in ongoing situations, is the investigative focus. Adrienne Dixon and David Bloome (2007) explain, “microethnographic discourse analysis of literacy events in classrooms suggest that many classrooms are contested historical sites in which difficult and complex cultural, linguistic, and racial politics are manifest” (p. 35). This suggested that microethnographic discourse analysis would be a useful approach for understanding how race talk (Pollock, 2004) and other forms of race production



impacted the teaching of literate practices in these two teacher-student cases. Microethnographic discourse analysis helped me to investigate literacy teaching patterns as both enacted pedagogical content knowledge and as race production.

Examination of race production during literacy instruction was the starting point for microethnographic discourse analysis. This resulted in an article about a key moment during Teacher A's instruction with her Black male student who was a youth hockey player (Croom, in press). Under the category of race production were the following three elements:

1. *Race talk*- a form of patterned cultural practice, with predictable scripts and silences with regard to racialization (Pollock, 2004), using or not using racial labels when talking about people.
2. *Genres of race*- recognizable forms of racialization or conventionalized ways of sharing racial meaning; typical forms of race production, for example: labeling (Pollock, 2004), ranking, common sensing, sciencing, naturalizing, placializing, naming, social classing (Croom, in press), vindicating, and other conventions of racialization (Croom, 2016).
3. *Race event*- instances when race production is significant to participants' interactions and interpretations (e.g., Dixson, 2008).

These elements of race production were used as my initial coding scheme for field notes and video analysis. Discourse analysis was ongoing and recursive (e.g. researcher memos, revision of interview protocols, member checks, etc.).

## Practice Theory of Race in Discourse Analysis

In response to the literature reviewed for this study, which reports that race is un(der)theorized in education research, I have developed a practice theory of race informed by Bernasconi (2001), Bourdieu (1977) and others (Guess, 2006; Happe, 2013; Mirón & Inda, 2000; Pascale, 2008). According to practice of race theory (PRT), race is a cultural-historically situated, multi-level, consequential, multimodal social practice. In my analysis, I critically examined written and unwritten D/discourses, meanings, structures, and multiple analytic levels of events to identify and trace race practice. Within a social interactional or microethnographic approach to discourse analysis, I focused on racial action and reaction, including micro-, meso-, and macroanalytic levels of interaction. As a result, I noted language practices, text practices, identity practices, and events wherein race action and reaction was evident. Because these teachers' race actions and reactions were meaningfully situated, they indexed these teachers' race conceptualization. In other words, I used evidence of situated practice to identify conceptualization of race. This means that I critically read teachers' racially situated practices, not their minds. In sum, my social interactional approach to race practice resulted in race critical practice analysis of the collected data.

### What Did I Look For?

In this race critical practice analysis, I began by looking for race talk, genres of race, and race events. Then, I noted language practices, text practices, identity practices, and events wherein race action and reaction was evident. Ultimately, I identified conceptualizations underlying the racially situated practices and events analyzed. I have provided examples of race

talk, genres or race, and race events and discuss where these examples have occurred in other research. Teachers' practices and conceptualizations will be reported in the findings.

#### Race Talk or Colormuteness

Mica Pollock (2004) has studied race talk in a California high school. In her book, *Colormute: Race Talk Dilemmas in an American School*, racial labeling was the focus because using, bending, and not using racial categories (as evidenced by associated racial labels) was prominent in her data for students, teachers, and policymakers. In Pollock's (2004) work, describing people racially constitutes "race talk" and "active *resistance to describing* people as racial" constitutes "colormuteness" (p. 44). Both student identities and teacher identifications of students were considered in her analysis. Pollock (2004) offers the following example of teacher race talk in her discussion and critique of teachers' "matter-of-fact race talk" about students' lunchtime social interactions:

"It's gotten much more segregated," he [a White, male teacher] says. "I went out to the quad at lunchtime and it was the Filipinos here, the Latinos over here, the Samoans over here, blacks over here." (p. 54)

As this discourse suggests, the teacher identifies many individual students and the gatherings of individual students using simple, self-evident racial labels. Further, this White, male teacher assumed that students gathered based on racial group membership, rather than as the result of any number of other social factors according to which these students may have been acting and reacting.

While teachers easily engaged in race talk when discussing relations between students, in discourse that focused on teacher-student relations, Pollock reports that race talk disappeared.

When discussing interactions between teachers and students, especially discipline-related interactions, teachers (and policy makers) resisted race talk or became colormute. In an extended excerpt from her fieldnotes, Pollock (2004) offers a rich episode:

[Mrs. King, an experienced Black teacher who is new to Columbus High School] says that faculty never “get down to” this [racial] issue [between teachers and students], but that they really should. “You can see it, hear it, in the faculty meetings,” she says. “You mean you can hear race under the conversation?” I [Pollock] ask. “Yes,” she says. “How do you hear it?” I ask. She says in people talking about discipline. But instead, they just take it all personally if they have problems, she says, asking. “You think it would help to talk about it?” I ask. “Yes,” she says. “How would it be worded if it came up in a meeting, on one of those lists [generated among the faculty to suggest ways to improve the school]?” I ask. “As relating to each other better,” she [Mrs. King] says. (p. 66)

This evidence suggests that the absence of race talk or colormuteness when teacher-student relations is the focus of inquiry, actually demonstrates how salient race may be to teacher-student interactions.

### Genres of Race

I identified seven genres of race in a study of a public Facebook post that referenced a public blog article written about the academic achievement of Black students in New York ([www.racialliteracies.org](http://www.racialliteracies.org); Croom, 2016). In this discourse analysis, I did not find word counts to be helpful in my attempt to account for the racialized character of the comments generated by the Facebook post. As a reader and participant in the Facebook discussion, I knew that a rich,

sophisticated racial conversation was occurring. Through my analysis, I discovered that I could empirically account for the race production I sensed by moving from the word level to the genre level of race discourse.

I defined genres of race as recognizable forms of racialization. In other words, genres of race are conventional ways of sharing racial meaning. I drew from the literature of genre studies to identify the typifications that were used to do race, and be understood as doing race, in the Facebook post, the associated blog article, and the comments. As I discovered, some race production occurs at the level of genre, meaning that race production does not only occur at the word level. This begins to explain why a racial label, a word level race production, does not capture all aspects of race production. Further, words that may not appear to be related to race at all can be rhetorically conditioned by a genre of race to accomplish race production. For example, in my analysis of the discourse, I found that writers used what might be called race-obvious words and also used what might be called race-neutral words that yet accomplish race production in the rhetorical context of human racialization. An instance of using race-obvious words is offered below:

Labeling: “Black student;” “Asian students;” “minority students;” “Wonder what the white percentage pass/fail was, wish the article had the info”

An instance of using race-neutral words in a genre of race to accomplish race production is the following:

Placializing: “The article specified that 31 inner city NY schools were surveyed, yet the title of the article claims supposed failure of 3 times that many schools.”

Table 6 lists and defines each genre of race from both the prior and present investigation.

**Table 6. Genres of Race**

Genres of Race Defined:

- Labeling- common racial classification terms or equivalent terms
- Ranking- implicit or explicit racial hierarchy
- Sciencing- bid for credibility with research or study
- Common sensing- bid for credibility with common sense
- Naturalizing- racial “markers” (e.g., hair, skin, bone, language, name, dress, label, etc.) index human characteristics, capacities, or culture
- Placializing- equating place and racialized people
- Naming- racial classification with proper nouns
- Social classing- equating social class and racial classification
- Vindicating- questioning racial common sense, countering White racial superiority, regarding human plentitude

**Table 7. Examples of Genres of Race**

- **Labeling:** “*Black student;*” “*Asian students;*” “*minority students;*” “*Wonder what the white percentage pass/fail was, wish the article had the info*”
- **Ranking:** “*Asian students...have never been in the lower gap with the other minority students.*”
- **Sciencing:** “*A new study showed that not a single black student had passed the math and reading exams that are required by the state.*”
- **Common sensing:** “*How much time and effort are the students and their parents putting into their educational pursuits? The child’s FIRST teacher is the PARENT!!*”
- **Naturalizing:** “*...out of the 1,065 black students...not a single one was able to pass it [state math test]...none of the 613 Hispanic students in 28 schools were able to pass either.*”

- **Placializing:** *“The article specified that 31 inner city NY schools were surveyed, yet the title of the article claims supposed failure of 3 times that many schools.”*
- **Naming:** *“Sherry knew her best friend, Mary, was extremely poor and couldn’t afford even a small gift for Sherry’s 12th birthday.”*
- **Social Classing:** *“Hockey is a very expensive sport for kids to play. Minorities don’t have money to spend on hockey.”*
- **Vindicating:** *“No, I am not providing excuses, but rather valid reasons that are ignored and the development of a “blame the child and blame the race” mentality – the worse part is that even some of us accept this blame!!!”*

## Race Events

As a result of reading Pollock’s work and struggling through my own research experience, I know that generating evidence of race production can be challenging. In Pollock’s (2004) study she reports,

As a beginning researcher, I spent several months struggling with the key analytic dilemma that incidents like this [teacher-student conflicts with racial significance] presented: while the student-adult conflicts at Columbus routinely *felt* racialized, the race labels that could “prove” such racialization were absent from most actual interactions. (p. 61)

As Pollock gradually discovered, teachers “never used race labels at all in public talk of conflicts between students and themselves” (p. 62). Pollock continues:

When planning together to improve “discipline” schoolwide and when publically describing any example of individual clashes over authority, adults typically described conflicts with named individuals, “students,” or various kinds “problem student”—not with race group members. Except when quoting students who spit

out race words in anger, adults discussing discipline almost never described *themselves* as racialized beings either. In fact, they only occasionally used race labels to describe either set of players [that is, students or teachers] when they were speaking in small private groupings of adults. (p. 62)

As all of this suggests, Pollock could only go so far empirically when relying on race labels. As I discovered in my own analytical struggle, race production does not only occur at the word level. Fortunately, I approached my discourse analysis not only at the word level, but also at the level of genre. The shift from race-obvious words to race-neutral words which were rhetorically conditioned by genres of race, opened the way for me to account empirically for occurrences that “felt” racialized to me as I participated in and analyzed the Facebook discussion. Pollock did not have a genre level conceptualization of the events that she was analyzing, but she noted that race-neutral words were being used in situations that seemed racialized to her and some teachers.

Taking these experiences seriously, I looked not only for *race talk* and *genres of race*, but also *race events*, meaning instances when race production was significant to the participants’ and researchers’ contextual interactions and interpretations. This third avenue of analysis anticipated that there might be occurrences during the investigation that could not be accounted for as race talk or as genres of race. As I sensed these more elusive, but apparently significant, moments of race production during the investigation, I noted these occurrences and closely analyzed them to determine their empirical value. As Pollock suggests, it was reasonable to expect that an impression, hunch, or feeling that arose during my investigation of race might have analytical importance later. This proved to be true during my analysis. I included race events in my analysis



to strategically cast a net wide enough to capture various reported and unreported forms of race production that occurred during this study.

## Coding

My coding followed the categories mentioned thus far: race talk or colormuteness, genres of race, and race events. When additional codes were needed (e.g. social classing, naming), I added them to the coding scheme and included them in the relevant reporting tables. I also created a coding grid to collect and report coding data. To gauge reliability, I shared my coding scheme with four outside coders and used data samples from each main category of codes generated to analyze the dataset, except the race event code. I could not design a viable way to share samples of race events for outside coders who were volunteering their time to help me calculate reliability. Because race events can be less explicit, they require a far more situated experience to identify them than I could recreate through sharing samples from my data. Following is a table of my codes and an example of the race coding grid. The inter-rater reliability report is provided in Table 9.

**Table 8. Coding**

	Definition	Example	Source	Notes	Misc.
<b>Race Talk/ Colormute</b>	Describing/ not describing people racially	“...the Filipinos here, the Latinos over here, the Samoans over here, blacks over	Pollock, 2004	Labeling genre covers “race talk,” but not “colormuteness.”	

		here...”			
<b>Genres of Race</b>	Recognizable forms of racialization with or without race-obvious words; also see Table 6	See Table 7	Croom, 2016	“Standardizing” and “pronouning” (e.g. we, us, our, them, they, etc; connotes racial inclusion or denotes racial exclusion) as other recognizable forms of consequential racialization in the social practice of race?	
<b>Race Event</b>	Instances when race production is significant to participants’ interactions and interpretations	See DeGaulle Excerpt	Dixson, 2008		

**Figure 1. Race Coding Grid**

Race Event		
Labeling	Social Classing	Ranking
Naming	Vindicating	Placializing
Naturalizing	Common Sensing	Sciencing

### **Five Conceptualizations of Race**

After noting the genres of race and race events, I also looked for other patterns of practice and events across the data set. At first I attempted to reduce the data to themes within the surveys, interviews, and lessons. When I realized that this did not adequately represent the patterns of practice, I opted to connect patterns across each of these particular situations. This allowed me to better triangulate from multiple sources and to identify teachers' race conceptualizations across the collected data. I used this recursive experience with the data set to identify and define five main patterns of practice (language practice, text practice, evasion practice, dysconscious practice, and racial literacies practice) and the race conceptualizations underlain. Patterns of meaningful action and reaction to the race layer of the situation (explained in the findings) allowed me to identify how teachers were conceptualizing race: Race as common sense, race as risky or tricky, race as dispensable or inessential, race as is, and race as sensible. I

included these five codes of teachers' conceptualizations of race in the inter-rater reliability samples.

### **Inter-Rater Reliability**

After data collection and analysis, I invited independent coding of the five conceptualizations I found and the nine genres of race. Four raters, two Black women (Rater A & B) and two White women (Rater Y & Z), were trained in my coding scheme and coded 20 samples from my collected data. I examined the item-by-item consistency and the overall consistency of these 20 data samples. Table 9 shows the item-by-item and overall consistency of the 20 data samples. I rated each line overall as: uniform consistency, high consistency, some consistency, and low consistency. Also, I compared my coding with theirs and marked agreement with "present (+)" and disagreement with "absent (-)." In 17 of 20 items there was high to uniform consistency and in 15 of 20 items agreement was present (+). Table 9 shows the results of each inter-rater coding of the data samples.

**Table 9. Inter-Rater Reliability Report**

	<b>PI</b>	<b>Rater A</b>	<b>Rater B</b>	<b>Rater Y</b>	<b>Rater Z</b>	<b>Overall</b>
Item 1	Race as Common Sense	Race as Common Sense	Race as Common Sense	Race as Common Sense	Race as "Is"	High+
Item 2	Race as Common Sense	Race as Common Sense	Race as "Is"	Race as Common Sense	Race as Common Sense	High+
Item 3	Race as Sensible	Race as Sensible	Race as Sensible	Race as Sensible	Race as Sensible	Uniform
Item 4	Race as Sensible	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Sensible	Race as Risky/Tricky	High-
Item 5	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Uniform
Item 6	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Uniform
Item 7	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Risky/Tricky, Race as Sensible	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as "Is"	Race as Common Sense	Some+
Item 8	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Common Sense, Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as "Is"	Race as Risky/Tricky	High+
Item 9	Race as Dispensable/Inessential, Race as "Is"	Race as Sensible	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as Sensible	Some+
Item 10	Race as "Is"	Race as "Is"	Race as Common Sense	Race as Common Sense	Race as "Is"	Some+
Item 11	Racial Labeling	Racial Labeling, Racial Sciencing	Racial Labeling, Racial Ranking	Racial Labeling	Racial Labeling, Racial Ranking, Racial Sciencing	High+
Item 12	Racial Labeling	Racial Labeling, Racial Common Sensing	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	Racial Labeling	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	High+
Item 13	Racial Labeling, Racial Social Classing	Racial Social Classing, Racial Placializing	Racial Social Classing, Racial Placializing	Racial Social Classing	Racial Labeling, Racial Placializing, Racial Common Sensing	High+
Item 14	Racial Labeling, Racial Social Classing	Racial Labeling, Racial Social Classing	Racial Labeling, Racial Social Classing	Racial Labeling, Racial Social Classing	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	High+
Item 15	Racial Vindicating, Racial Placializing	Racial Placializing, Racial Sciencing	Racial Placializing	Racial Ranking, Racial Placializing	Racial Vindicating, Racial Placializing	High+
Item 16	Racial Labeling, Racial Placializing	Racial Placializing	Racial Labeling, Racial Placializing	Racial Placializing	Racial Vindicating, Racial Placializing	High+

Item 17	Racial Labeling, Racial Naming	Racial Naming	Racial Naming	Racial Labeling, Racial Naming	Racial Labeling, Racial Naming, Racial Common Sensing	High+
Item 18	Racial Naming	Racial Social Classing, Racial Naming	Racial Social Classing	Racial Social Classing, Racial Naming	Racial Social Classing, Racial Naming	High+
Item 19	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	Racial Labeling, Racial Ranking	Racial Ranking	Racial Labeling, Racial Ranking	Racial Labeling, Racial Ranking, Racial Sciencing	High-
Item 20	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing, Racial Common Sensing	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	Racial Labeling	Racial Labeling, Racial Naturalizing	High+

### 3.9 Summary

This study recruited two dyads of qualified participants from a Midwestern university literacy practicum (phase one). This study included two subgroups (cases) of teachers and students in the literacy practicum clinical program. Data was collected with a digital survey, interviews, and recorded observation, including incomplete use of the observation instrument, researcher note-taking over the entire practicum, and images (phase two; data collection phase). The observation instrument was used during analysis of video recordings generated during data collection, rather than in the field (audio recordings were also generated). This data set was analyzed from a social interactional or microethnographic discourse approach with a practice theory of race. Some analysis (phase three) partly overlapped with the data collection phase as the investigator began to puzzle over race events that were sensed, but unclear. During the analysis of the data (phase three), findings were written (phase four). Therefore, phase four was not separate from phase three, but began and continued concurrent with phase three until the focus turned to finalizing the text of the written report.

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.0 Overview

In this chapter, I discuss findings from the study. The study was designed to answer the question: *How is teacher conceptualization of race evident in literacy instruction?* I begin by reporting the five conceptualizations of race evidenced through teachers' race actions and reactions across lessons, interviews, and surveys. In my examination of the data set, I did not isolate lesson observations from the surveys and interviews. Literacy instruction includes elements which occur before and after a particular lesson. Therefore, I used all of these situations to identify teachers' conceptualizations of race. I also report other language and practice findings which were drawn from across the data collected.

### 4.1 Teachers' Conceptualizations of Race

I found that these two teachers evidenced their conceptualization of race in five ways: 1) language practice, 2) text practice, 3) evasion practice, 4) dysconscious practice<sup>7</sup>, and 5) racial literacies practice. In the case of Teacher B, she appeared to hold a hybrid of these conceptualizations or perhaps some other unidentified conceptualization(s) as well during instruction. Genres of race and race events occurred amid these practices. The five practices indicated that these teachers had multiple conceptualizations of race: *race as common sense* (viewing race as self-evident, biological, or as an ordinary human feature), *race as risky or tricky* (viewing race as threatening, stressful, worrying, controversial, or problematic), *race as*

---

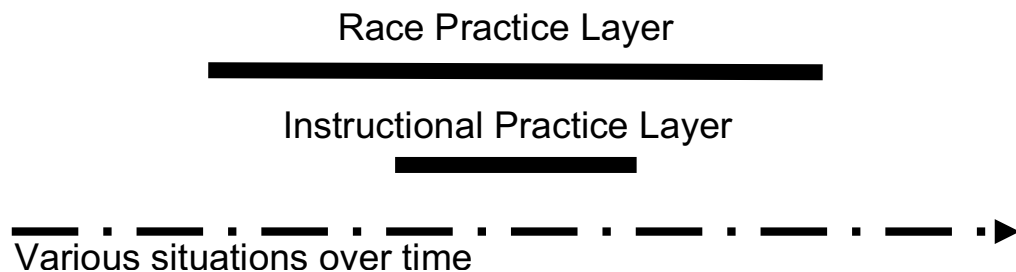
<sup>7</sup> I intentionally borrow a word from Joyce E. King's (1991) "Dysconscious racism: Ideology, identity, and the miseducation of teachers." Yet, I have used this word to identify a practice, not to identify racism. Dysconscious practice, however, may be related to dysconscious racism, as King defines it. I did not pursue the issue of racism in this study.

*dispensable or inessential* (viewing race as irrelevant, insignificant, pointless, or not worthwhile), *race as is* (viewing race as something that need not be critically engaged), and *race as sensible* (viewing race as helpful, approachable, reasonable, clarifying, or as a contribution). These five conceptualizations of race did not map onto each practice. Each conceptualization of race was evidenced across more than one practice. More specifically, at times teachers expressed postracialism, colormuteness, and even conflated race with culture while evidencing these five conceptualizations of race. These particular findings align with what I found in the archival literature reviewed in chapter 2 above.

Additionally, I have identified (at least) two analytical layers within this data set. On one analytical layer there is the *instructional practices* of these teachers and on the other we have the *race practices* of these teachers. These are merely analytical distinctions. In the experience of teaching practice, these two layers are interlaced. The foregrounding or backgrounding of each analytic layer depends on the situation in which both interwoven practices are unfolding. My analytical distinction makes a difference between race practice and instructional practice without claiming that these are fully independent from one another in teaching and learning situations. I have created an analytical visualization of these situation layers from my dataset. The race practice layer is included in teaching situations, but does not begin and end with teaching situations (longer line compared with shorter line). Teaching situations inherently include instructional practice. Both race practice and instructional practice might occur within various situations over time, not strictly in the situation of a university literacy practicum or a single literacy lesson (broken line).



**Figure 2. Analytic Layers of Situated Teaching Practice**



What follows, then, is primarily focused on analyzing the race practice layer of my data set across various situations, including observed lessons—a situation where I discuss instructional practice. As teachers acted and reacted to the race practice layer of the situation, their practices evidenced their conceptualizations of race.

Table 10 illustrates each conceptualization of race and the practices which evidenced the conceptualization. In the sections that follow, I report how these teachers evidenced their conceptualizations of race and the underlying race conceptualizations themselves. Where possible, I begin with the case of Teacher A, then the case of Teacher B, and finally the cross case findings for both. Otherwise, I report the case where I found evidence of practice and conceptualization.

**Table 10. Five Conceptualizations of Race and their Practices**

Race as Common Sense	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Dispensable/ Inessential	Race as “Is”	Race as Sensible
Language practice	Language practice	Language practice	Language practice	Language practice

Text practice	Text practice	Text practice	Text practice	Text practice
Evasion practice	Evasion practice	Evasion practice	Evasion practice	
Dysconscious practice	Dysconscious practice	Dysconscious practice	Dysconscious practice	
Racial Literacies Practice				Racial Literacies Practice

#### **4.1.1 Finding 1: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Language Practice**

Language provided evidence about how each teacher conceptualized race (see Appendix A, p. 207). Teachers used language in three situations related to their literacy instruction: digital survey, one-on-one interviews, and during instruction with Black children in the elementary grades.

##### *Conceptualization in Digital Survey Responses*

##### Teacher A

For Teacher A, her written language included the *labeling* genre of race. When asked about her experience teaching diverse students reading or writing, she reported that “The demographics of the current school I work with is about 50% white, 20% african american, 12% hispanic, 8% asian, and 10% multi-race.” This is shown in Figure 3.

### Figure 3. Teacher A Survey Response

Do you have experience teaching diverse students reading or writing? Tell about your experience with teaching a diverse student. Also, explain how this particular student was diverse. \*

Being a special educator, all of my students are diverse! I have worked with students with autism, down syndrome, seizure disorders, learning disabilities, cognitive delays and disabilities, language processing disorders, etc. The demographics of the current school I work with is about 50% white, 20% african american, 12% hispanic, 8% asian, and 10% multi-race. Our district is about 20% free-and reduced lunch. I have worked with students with unique family situations and home lives as well as students that come from a group home who have experiences a great deal of trauma and typically come from hospitalization.

This survey response shows evidence of racial labeling and *race as common sense*, but this also can be interpreted as a distancing move. Note that while this demographic breakdown of race offers some basic information about the school in which she worked, it does not reveal the racial demographics of her own students. This is evidenced by the line that immediately preceded the quote above: “I have worked with students with autism, down syndrome, seizure disorders, learning disabilities, cognitive delays and disabilities, language processing disorders, etc.” One might expect for “I have worked with students...” to lead a description with more details about the students with whom she has worked. What we read after this setup, however, is more detail about the school, not her own students. Additionally, the line following both of these statements offers a detail about the district. Yet, after reporting school and district information she returns to the same language setup “I have worked with students...” to talk about her students’ families and home lives. Teacher A offers no details about her own experience with teaching students who are racialized, only that her students had various special needs, disabilities, and disorders. One is simply left to wonder, or maybe even assume, the racial

classification of her students. When interpreted as a distancing move, Teacher A evidenced *colormuteness* in her written language when asked about her experience teaching diverse students reading and writing. In other words, she did not write about her own students with racial language, she wrote about her school's demographics in racial language. She knew how she racially identified her students, but would not disclose this information in her survey response. This begins to evidence that she understood *race as risky or tricky*.

It is not clear why she practiced colormuteness, but it is evident that she did. I compared Teacher A's written survey response with the verbal response she gave during our one-on-one entry interview when I asked the prepared follow up question about the digital survey. In her interview language, Teacher A explained that her most recent roster of Special Education students included "a caseload of about 20 students, third through fifth grade...of those 20 students 16 of them were African American, one was Asian, and three were Caucasian" (*labeling* genre of race). She went on to share that "our district is kind of grappling with some disproportionality" (*colormuteness*). This interview data and survey data suggest that discussing her students' diversity opened a race event—an instance when race production was significant to her contextual interactions and interpretations—about the racial disproportionality of Special Education students in her district and the racial demographics of her own Special Education caseload. Teacher A also explained that reading and writing were her main foci as a Special Education teacher with these 20 students, 80% of whom were Black (and apparently boys). As I have reported above, these kinds of details about her own students were not offered in her survey language. This suggests that Teacher A is very much aware of her students' racial identities and chooses how and when she shares what she knows about the race analytic level of teaching

practice. The language practices in Teacher A's survey response and entry interview indicate that she conceptualized *race as common sense* and as *risky/tricky*.

### *Teacher B*

For Teacher B, her written language offered a total of nine words that were related to race. All nine of these words were parenthetically mentioned to explain her use of the phrase "diverse backgrounds." This is shown in Figure 4.

#### **Figure 4. Teacher B Survey Response**

Do you have experience teaching diverse students reading or writing? Tell about your experience with teaching a diverse student. Also, explain how this particular student was diverse. \*

My work as a Special Education teacher brought me into contact with a very diverse group of students every day. In addition to having a diverse range of abilities, these students had diverse religious beliefs (some were not at all religious, some were various Christian denominations, some were Jewish, some were Wiccan, some were Muslim), diverse backgrounds (I have worked with students of every color, and students of mixed race/ethnicities, with some speaking a language other than English at home), and even diverse sexual orientations (I worked with a transgender student).

As with Teacher A, discussing student diversity opened a race event, that is, an instance when race production was significant to her contextual interactions and interpretations. However, in this case the race event was about framing race as a minor detail of her students "backgrounds" using language that I could not definitively place within a genre of race. As I see it now, these nine words might either be racial labeling, racial naturalizing, or both. Yet, just as the presence of race-related words or racial genres is meaningful, also meaningful is the limited use, unclear use, or absence of race-related words or racial genres. Teacher B evidenced her race

thinking in this survey with two phrases, “students of every color” and “students of mixed race/ethnicities,” and both were framed as describing students with “diverse backgrounds.” I interpreted her written language as evidence of understanding race as color, race as biologically inherited, and race as equivalent with ethnicity—that is, race as common sense. Importantly, however, Teacher B did not appear to describe students’ language as equivalent with race in her response.

When I saw that Teacher B thought of race as a personal characteristic (race as common sense), rather than seeing race as a human cultural practice within which one is consequentially situated (race as consequential social practice), it brought my attention to the way “diverse backgrounds” was used in her response. When Teacher B used the language “diverse backgrounds” it was in the context of listing the “diverse religious beliefs” and “diverse sexual orientations” of her students. Framed this way, race is neatly package—d as ‘one in the bundle of difference,’ from a relativistic perspective. Just as no religion or sexuality is considered right or wrong and does not deserve more or less attention or emphasis, from this relativistic view, one’s particular race is also framed as just another racial category among others, another personal characteristic, or another “background” element among many others—that is, race as dispensable or inessential. This view of race is misleading, however, because there is in fact racial hierarchy and significant differences between being associated with particular racial groups in human culture. There is also justified reason to highlight the differences that human racialization produces among students, namely to trace the consequences of racial hierarchy and racial differentiation. Further, the way Teacher B frames racial background differences as having equal weight and significance with religious belief differences and sexual orientation differences is

naive, at best, or dishonest. When “diverse backgrounds” includes students’ racial classification, this aspect of their background likely has a cross-cutting influence on their religious beliefs (e.g., Black liberation theology) and sexual orientation (e.g., Black Queer Studies). Historically, then, one’s race is weighted differently, not equally, in human social relations compared to one’s religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Such a relativistic view of race, then, is unwarranted and unrealistic. Teacher B’s ‘one in the bundle of difference’ response can be linked with Robin DiAngelo’s (2011) discussion of “White Fragility.”

Whites invoke these seemingly contradictory discourses—we are either all unique or we are all the same—interchangeably. Both discourses work to deny white privilege and the significance of race. Further, on the cultural level, being an individual or being a human outside of a racial group is a privilege only afforded to white people. In other words, people of color are almost always seen as “having a race” and described in racial terms (“the black man”) but whites rarely are (“the man”), allowing whites to see themselves as objective and non-racialized. In turn, being seen (and seeing ourselves) as individuals outside of race free whites from the psychic burden of race in a wholly racialized society. Race and racism become their problems, not ours. Challenging these frameworks becomes a kind of unwelcome shock to the system. (p. 60)

I relate Teacher B’s response to her own experiences of living on racially White terms. As I will discuss later, she experienced her own personal shock to the system of racial dysconsciousness by which she had been operating. Teacher A is arguably framing her students in racial terms with which she is comfortable, whether she is aware or unaware of this move. It is also worth noting

that the racial hierarchy and racial difference-making which is our current reality, is not just a part of one's "background," these continue to have present effects. Teacher B evidences a kind of racial relativity, maybe naivety, in her survey that is misguided. The language practices of Teacher B indicate that she conceptualized race both as *common sense* and as *dispensable/inessential*.

*Across the Cases of Teacher A and Teacher B: Conceptualization in Digital Survey Responses*

Both teachers wrote about their view of diversity from the standpoint of Special Education teachers. Each teacher included a range of factors in their view of diversity, including (dis)ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomics, and religion. In these two cases, this rich perspective of diversity is outstanding and may not be typical among the population of teachers in the U.S. Despite this rich definition of diversity, however, both teachers were unwilling to focus on race in their digital survey responses for their own reasons. In each case, race was understood according to the common sense view and was given minimal consideration, despite the undeniable significance of race in Special Education and Literacy Education. One is left with the sense that in both cases, these teachers conceptualized race as something to be given either little attention or to be handled carefully and with caution, if at all. In this view, race is threatening and risky, even a potential pitfall or tricky. For these two teachers at this point in my study, race was something a professional educator holds at bay in the work of teaching—preventing race from causing problems in one's professional teaching. Table 11 is a comparison table of the race conceptualizations evident in the language practice of Teacher A and Teacher B.



**Table 11: Conceptualizations of Race in Language Practice and Race Coding Grid for Teacher A & B**

<b>Race as Common Sense</b>	<b>Race as Risky/Tricky</b>	<b>Race as Dispensable/ Inessential</b>	<b>Race as “Is”</b>	<b>Race as Sensible</b>
Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A	Teacher B		

<b>Race Event</b>		
Teacher A & Teacher B		
<b>Labeling</b> Teacher A Teacher B?	<b>Social Classing</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Naming</b>	<b>Vindicating</b>	<b>Placializing</b>
<b>Naturalizing</b> Teacher B?	<b>Common Sensing</b>	<b>Sciencing</b>

#### **4.1.2 Finding 2: Teachers’ Race Conceptualization in Text Practice**

##### *Teacher A: Conceptualization of Race in Lessons*

In two of the three lessons nominated by Teacher A, she evidenced her conceptualization of race through text practice (see Appendix A, p. 207).

##### *Teacher A: Lesson Seven*

During lesson 7 on day 7 of the practicum, Teacher A opened up a race event by reading the title of the nonfiction text she selected to teach highlighting as a comprehension strategy. The

race event was about the number of “minority fans” in hockey, specifically in Chicago: “Blackhawks fever sweeps Chicago, pulls in minority fans,” she read. This evidenced the *labeling* genre of race in two modes, the teacher’s own talk and in the text she selected for this lesson. This relationship between the text used and the teacher’s own talk brought my attention to the text practices she carried out during instruction. These text practices evidenced Teacher A’s conceptualization of race as she acted and reacted to the race practice of the text during instruction. At times, the teacher’s text practice also influenced her student’s talk. Between the teacher, student, and text, three genres of race were used: *labeling*, *placializing*, and *social classing*. It was unclear to me whether *common sensing* was used. Table 12 shows these racial genres across teacher, student, and text.

**Table 12: Lesson 7 Observation Instrument Examples**

Genre of Race	Time(s):	Teacher Use Tally	Student Use Tally	Text Use Talley
Labeling	7:18; 11:08; 11:48; 17:43; 18:02; 18:34; 19:42; 20:46; 21:00;	1 (“White dominated sport”); 1 “primarily by whites”; 1 (“whites”); 1 (“whites”); 1 (“Blackhawks have three Black players”)	1 “more non-white players”; 1 (“more white players before”)	1 (“minority fans”); 1 (“minority fans”); 1 “primarily by whites”

Ranking				
Common Sensing				?
Sciencing				
Naturalizing				
Placializing	9:55; 10:15	1 (“where she lives”) 1 (Cubs north side; Sox south side)	1 (she lives on the side where the Bulls, Sox, Bears, and Sox are”)	
Vindicating				
Social Classing	35:02	1 “or maybe they don’t have the money to spend on it, right?”		1 (“the sport remains out of reach for many people of color”)
Naming				

Teacher A’s text practice evidenced her conceptualization of *race as is*—meaning that she viewed race as something that need not be critically engaged. Teacher A did not question the deficit racial storylines of the text, rather she *copypasted* the racial meaning of the text from one mode of language to another. In other words, she uncritically reproduced the written racial meaning of the text in her own talk with her student, specifically the *social classing* racial genre. The following is an excerpt from an article that Teacher A selected from Newsela.com along with an excerpt of her talk during the lesson, as published elsewhere (Croom, in press).

## Pricey Sport For Kids To Play

The cost of the sport is another deterrent, experts said.

“The problem with hockey is that it’s not a sport you can go in your backyard and play,” said Jimmy Terracino, director of operations at the Bobby Hull Ice Rink in Cicero, Ill.. “You’ve got to have an ice rink. You need skates, you need sticks, helmets, gloves, elbow pads, shin guards. That limits many people from playing or learning it.”

Still, in the Chicago area there are efforts to develop interest in the sport among minorities. For example, there are youth hockey leagues based at Johnny’s IceHouse which reach out to local minority children so they can learn and play.

In Cicero, where 78 percent of the town’s population identifies as being of Mexican descent, there is a \$3.5 million ice rink. The rink rents skates and equipment and has become popular among the town’s Latino children, Terracino said.

“With the Blackhawks doing good, it gives the sport wider exposure and gets even more kids interested in hockey,” he said.

After probing Brian to list the equipment that he knows hockey requires, using this listing to make the point that she considers hockey to be a “very expensive sport,” she asked,

Becca: *...and how could that limit people [who are urban minorities] from playing hockey or learning it?* [as Brian is highlighting the text, she looks down at the text with him before looking over to him for his response]

The deficit racial storylines offered by the nonfiction text are uncritically echoed by Teacher A’s own talk during the lesson, both of which set up as social fact something that her student had navigate as a learner. The specific deficit racial storylines that moved across modes of language is less important than identifying the processes by which the racial meaning

circulated, uninterrupted, from the text, to the teacher's talk, to the student's learning situation. Teacher A's conceptualization of *race as is*—as something that need not be questioned—resulted in text practices that might have been harmful to her student. Because my investigation was focused on the teacher, I did not engage her student to inquire about how he experienced the meaning of the deficit racial storylines which circulated during instruction.

Having made the more important point about the processes of intermodal racial meaning, I report in more detail the particulars of the text practice as I observed it carried out by Teacher A. As I have described elsewhere (Croom, in press), Teacher A uncritically reframed her student's view of why some minorities don't spend money to play hockey in order to make his view fit within the deficit racial storylines of the selected text.

#### *Evidence within a Race Event*

On day seven of the university literacy practicum, [Teacher A] and I continued the strict routine of recording her post-instruction interview immediately after her pre-lesson interview and observed lesson with [Black boy] (pseudonym). Minutes before her post-lesson interview, I had taken note of a moment during the lesson, after 34 minutes of video recording, when she reframed Brian's answer to a question she asked as they discussed this text:

#### **Pricey Sport For Kids To Play**

The cost of the sport is another deterrent, experts said.

“The problem with hockey is that it's not a sport you can go in your backyard and play,” said Jimmy Terracino, director of operations at the Bobby Hull Ice Rink in Cicero, Ill.. “You've got to have an ice rink. You need skates, you need sticks, helmets, gloves, elbow pads, shin guards. That limits many people from playing or learning it.”

Still, in the Chicago area there are efforts to develop interest in the sport among minorities. For example, there are youth hockey leagues based at Johnny's IceHouse which reach out to local minority children so they can learn and play.

In Cicero, where 78 percent of the town's population identifies as being of Mexican descent, there is a \$3.5 million ice rink. The rink rents skates and equipment and has become popular among the town's Latino children, Terracino said.

"With the Blackhawks doing good, it gives the sport wider exposure and gets even more kids interested in hockey," he said.

After probing Brian to list the equipment that he knows hockey requires, using this listing to make the point that she considers hockey to be a "very expensive sport," she asked,

[Teacher A]: *...and how could that limit people [who are urban minorities] from playing hockey or learning it?* [as Black boy is highlighting the text, she looks down at the text with him before looking over to him for his response]

[Black boy]: *Because there's not many places that have it, you can't have it in your backyard if you don't have ice.*

[Teacher A]: *We definitely talked about that. There's not a lot of places to play. And the cost [with pivoting emphasis], since we know that in...* [Brian interjects]

[Black boy]: [false starts and unclear talk]...*People might not want to spend that money?*

[Teacher A]: *People might not want to spend that, or maybe they don't have the money to spend on it, right? Cause it [swallow pause] it is a game. It is a...it...It's*

*not a necessity. It's a choice that someone would want to play, right? And if you don't have the money it could be very difficult to play, right? Alright, let's keep reading.* [A dry sniff punctuates her friendly directive, maybe like a poker tell, as she leans over with Brian to continue reading.]

As we see, [Teacher A] reframed [Black boy]'s answer from "they might not want to spend that money" to "they don't have the the money to spend." I know—from other lesson observations, from observing this lesson, and from interviews with [Teacher A]—that Brian shared that he was himself a youth hockey player and that he came to know the sport because of his family, who once lived in Canada. (pp. 15-17)

Teacher A does not view race as something to critically engage, therefore she reproduced the racial meaning of the text rather than question or interrupt the racial meaning of the text.<sup>8</sup> The fact that this occurred with an informational text makes this all the more troubling and

---

<sup>8</sup> Thanks to Theresa Thorkildsen for a helpful conversation after a presentation of this pre-publication article at the ninth annual (2018) UIC College of Education Research Day. I think it is important to note an important interpretive possibility that she mentioned: Perhaps the text authors use "...it's not a sport you can go in your backyard and play..." metaphorically or for some other rhetorical reason(s). If taken as metaphor, this opens the possibility that neither the teacher nor the student (nor the investigator) should have read the text literally as meaning that backyard hockey playing is impossible. Be that as it may, it is clear that the teacher and student *did* indeed read this information text literally. Perhaps there are other important ways in which to read this text and other informational texts, but in this case the teacher and student opted for a literal reading of the article. The participants' reading informed my interpretation. Again, the genre expectations of information texts invite literal readings, even if not exclusively so. More critical readings of this text and other texts would allow for less literal readings to be taught and learned during literacy instruction. Without question, inviting only literal readings of texts is a very limited approach literacy instruction. I sincerely appreciate Thorkildsen's contribution to my investigation.

potentially harmful for her student—a Black boy who is himself a youth hockey player. Note this exchange during the lesson:

**Teacher A:** Ok, what did you highlight there?

**Black boy:** [Reading the text] “...have not been a lot of big stars who are minorities.”

**Teacher A:** Minorities. Um, hmm. What do you think that...the significance of that is?

**Black boy:** There’s not a lot of superstars that are like, a, a certain color. Not nonWhite.

**Teacher A:** Oh, I agree. I, I, I do agree. Cause there really just aren’t a lot of nonWhite hockey players. Don’t you think?

**Black boy:** Yeah.

**Teacher A:** And, and do you have anymore thought as to why that might be?

**Black boy:** There’s not a lot of them.

**Teacher A:** There’s just not a lot of them. Yeah. Ok. Alright. Let’s keep reading.

As we see, Teacher A could have moved beyond the parameters of the information text to supplement what is left unsaid—the structural and other reasons why the NHL has few nonWhite hockey players. But she leaves these matters unquestioned and unanswered. Teacher A leaves this racial issue where the text and student have brought it, without her own critical engagement of the text or the social reality of the NHL that the text presents. An investigation of student learning would seek what this student learned from this article and the teacher’s text practice with this article, which she selected for instruction. This point relates to the “hidden curriculum” and the “null curriculum” of schooling, beyond the explicit curriculum and other ways of



identifying curricular aims and effects (Eisner, 1994; P. W. Jackson, 1968; G. Ladson-Billings, 2016; Milner, 2013; Woodson, 1933).

I captured Teacher A's conceptualization of race and the race production which occurred in this lesson with the following race coding grid:

**Teacher A: Lesson Seven Race Coding Grid Results**

<b>Race Event</b>		
Teacher A		
<b>Labeling</b> Teacher A	<b>Social Classing</b> Teacher A	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Naming</b>	<b>Vindicating</b>	<b>Placializing</b> Teacher A
<b>Naturalizing</b>	<b>Common Sensing</b> ?	<b>Sciencing</b>

*Teacher A: Lesson Eight*

In the pre-lesson interview for lesson eight, Teacher A responded to the standard pre-lesson questions presented in chapter three. When asked about which texts/materials she had selected for day eight, she explained that she was going to give more focus on silent reading comprehension with another informational text about hockey (she had also selected a different information text about hockey for the seventh lesson, during day seven of practicum instruction). She read the title of the hockey article to me: "The NHL Looks to Inner Cities for New Generation of Diverse Players." She also summarized the article and what she had in mind when she chose it for this lesson,

“So it’s all about how the NHL has been, um, kind of pairing with communities where there are currently NHL teams. And, um, working to get, like, youth organizations within the inner city and the outskirts to have access to ice rinks and, um, ah, materials for play-- [trails off] yeah, materials: ice skates, things like that. Because it talks about, you know, one of the biggest problems is accessibility, you know, a lot of these, um, NHL teams are based in cities, so although there might be hype created around the sport and the team itself, there’s very few ice rinks within the city limits so, you know, there’s just not a lot of accessibility to materials. And to a setting to play in. So, um, it kinda plays off of our article yesterday. Um, we do have a larger project that we are [pause] [that] I really would like to get done. So I am gonna kind of like cut this off [she is smiling as I chuckle at her anticipated point] at 30 minutes since we spent a lot of time yesterday. My primary goal is looking for silent reading comprehension because, um, [Black boy’s name] was so successful yesterday and I kinda attributed that to a number of factors. So, um, what I’m looking for today is, I’m gonna take away some of the conversation and some of the probing. I’d like him to do, um, silent reading using the same skills we used yesterday of highlighting and then reflecting afterward. And then we’ll have short discussion afterward. There’s no comprehension check, but I kinda just want to see how he’s processing and understanding the information, without someone constantly stopping and asking him questions. Um, I think there’s a little less connection to [pause] this article only because it’s more of a broad sense--it’s not necessarily, um, Chicago

based. The last article had a lot of connections to Chicago, to the Blackhawks, to ice rinks around the [Chicago] area. So it kind of takes away some of that for [Black boy's name]. But it still does talk about youth hockey players which [false enunciation start] he identifies with, obviously, because he is a youth- [wordplay break] hockey-player. Um, so I'm kinda just trying to tease what does support his reading, his silent reading comprehension."

Upon hearing that the comprehension check would be different from lessons past, I asked her about this change and we discussed it. In short, she felt it best to give a less formal comprehension check this time. I reasoned that repeating the check as it had been done before, with the changed conditions she planned to create, might be a worthwhile comparison. Fate would have it otherwise. The Black boy would still, however, complete the written 3-2-1 reflection as he had done in the prior lesson.

Continuing the standard pre-lesson questions, I decided to omit the "need to know about the student" question and I ended the interview by asking about how Teacher A would know that her instruction was successful. She answered, "I am looking for success in, in, in [Black boy's] ability to participate and engage in that kind of [dialogue that she had seen in yesterday's] conversation [about the text, however, this time], um, without some of the scaffolding that he had yesterday." I followed up: "And it's important to back down the scaffolding because...?" Teacher A explained,

"I'm just trying to tease out what, what is it that works for him. I think there was a lot of, um, [pause] you know [pause] things 'in check' yesterday for him and it was kind of like the ideal [longer pause] recipe, if you will. You know, the text

choice was good, he had a lot of scaffolding from me, he had tools to support his comprehension before he was able to kind of show what he knew. So, um, I'm not sure *all* of that scaffolding is needed for him to comprehend. We don't wanna give our students more than they actually need. You'd want to challenge them and push them. So, I'm kinda trying to tease out what that, where he's at exactly. What he needs, cause, I think, you know, couple of the strategies we tried before that were scaffold[ing] didn't work for him. So...[trails into affirmative head nod]."

I had questions about her rationale. I wasn't sure I agreed with the rationale. I wondered if this White woman was simply finding a way to counteract the obvious success of yesterday's lesson with this Black boy. In yesterday's lesson, engagement was high, the dialogue was rich, her student demonstrated comprehension and skillful highlighting, and the reading experience seemed to tap multiple student identities. I wondered why she had decided to do things that were counterintuitive, if not outright undermining, from my perspective of the instruction. I decided to go public with what I thought might be considered an important bias once I went back to analyze this day's record more closely:

"For the sake of getting it out, I'm thinking about it, as I said yesterday, from a Vygotskian standpoint--of leading students toward the learning--um, more, um [pause] um--what is it? [to self aloud]--we refer to it as, um, more knowledgeable others who can help bring along those who are trying to learn something. So I'm really, um, keying in on that because, um, I'm trying to understand, um, how my thinking about it is playing into the way that I'm interpreting your instructional

moves. I'm puttin' that on the record because that's just a part of the study, in terms of 'what am I bringing to it?' the way I'm asking you what you're bringing to it."

Once I went public with my sense of misgivings and a potentially important bias, I closed the pre-lesson interview.

During the lesson eight, I observed the following lesson structure, as noted in my observation instrument:

"Lesson Focus: Lesson is about highlighting again; 3,2,1 reflection with text; iMovie project; "NHL looks to Inner Cities for New Generations of Diverse Players" article from Rolling Stones magazine. Teacher relates this text and yesterday's hockey text. "Highlight whatever you think is an important idea or detail" [hands over highlighter to Black boy]; iMovie project, student elected to skip Big Nate read aloud.

Adherence to literacy practicum lesson structure? Circle: **Yes** or No

-Review of student journal writing

-Lesson focus (above)

-Exit survey ticket"

Within this lesson, Teacher A opened a race event which lasted from 1:57 until 22:57 of the video recording. The race event was about the relationship between the National Hockey League, "inner cities," and "diverse players." The keywords signaling this race event were "inner cities" and "diverse," and these words fall within the *labeling* and *placializing* genre of race. These exact same genres were also used in the text selected for this lesson. Additionally, the *social classing* racial genre was used by the teacher and student between 20:11 and 22:23 of the video recording as the teacher discussed the text with the student, relative to comprehending the meaning of the informational text. As the teacher planned, she did not engage the student very

much during the silent reading, only three times. Despite the fact that the text affordances allowed for engaging the racial layer in substantive ways during this instructional situation, Teacher A limited her conversation with the student to the unquestioned ‘facts’ of this information text. This was also true of the day seven lesson. The teacher stuck to reproducing the meaning of the text through inviting displays of comprehension, but never questioned the way the text framed “inner city,” “diverse,” access, affordable, hockey fans, implied racial storylines, or other meanings, figured worlds, or Discourses produced in the text. This suggested that Teacher A was conceptualizing *race as is* and as *dispensable/inessential*. One of my notes from the observation instrument says it best:

“This question characterizes Teacher A’s approach toward the race practice level of this lesson and the previous lesson: “Anything else you wanted to pull out or comment on?” [boy] No. [Teacher] No? Ok. Cool. Alright, well the rest of the time...[22:21-22:30] It appears that this race event is closing as she transitions to the iMovie project.”

Teacher A left it up to her student—a Black boy who was a youth hockey player—to lead her at the race layer of this learning situation and the previous lesson. Yet, she lead her student at the instructional layer of these learning situations. It is more sensible, especially from a Vygotskian perspective, for teachers to lead students at both of these analytic layers of the teaching situation. After all, has the student designed the instruction and selected the texts or has the teacher done so?

I captured the race production which occurred in this lesson with the following race coding grid:

**Teacher A: Lesson Eight Race Coding Grid Results**

<b>Race Event</b>		
Teacher A		
<b>Labeling</b> Teacher A	<b>Social Classing</b> Teacher A	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Naming</b>	<b>Vindicating</b>	<b>Placializing</b> Teacher A
<b>Naturalizing</b>	<b>Common Sensing</b>	<b>Sciencing</b>

**Table 13: Conceptualizations of Race in Text Practice and Race Coding Grid for Teacher A**

<b>Race as Common Sense</b>	<b>Race as Risky/Tricky</b>	<b>Race as Dispensable/ Inessential</b>	<b>Race as “Is”</b>	<b>Race as Sensible</b>
Teacher A		Teacher A	Teacher A	

<b>Race Event</b>		
Lesson 7 & Lesson 8		
<b>Labeling</b> Teacher A	<b>Social Classing</b> Teacher A	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Naming</b>	<b>Vindicating</b>	<b>Placializing</b> Teacher A

Naturalizing	Common Sensing ?	Sciencing
--------------	---------------------	-----------

### 4.1.3 Finding 3: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Evasion Practice

Teacher A and Teacher B practiced race evasion during this investigation (see Appendix A, p. 207). In both cases, evasion occurred during the survey (note again the undeniable significance of race in Special Education and Literacy Education), interviews, and lessons, but the case of Teacher A is a remarkable example. Importantly, Teacher A would also evidence a remarkable example of racial literacies practice by the end of this investigation.

#### *Teacher A: Conceptualization in Entry Interview*

During our entry interview, Teacher A evidenced some elaborate evasion practice after I asked her how skin color difference, which she described as a factor between herself and her school students, was an important point in her reply (she was not referring to racial differences between her practicum student and herself). Her evasion practice evidenced her conceptualization of *race as common sense* and *risky/tricky*. There was also the sense that racial difference was a taxing experience for her which felt like an unbridgeable chasm. According to Teacher A, being racially different from her students, specifically as a White woman, put her at an immediate disadvantage as a teacher. For Teacher A, between herself and her racially different students there appeared to be an impassable racial ravine of difference. Race was also conflated with culture, which added to this fundamental and naturalized difference between her students and herself (*naturalizing* genre of race?).



**PI:** And so the last question, um, of the task: Which of your own identities are important to you when you are teaching?

**Teacher A:** You know, to me...I--I, I and I don't know if this is right or wrong--but I do look different than many of my students. And I cannot...I can learn as much about their culture as I possibly can, I can--you know--really spend time getting to know their families; I can, um, put myself on the playground, in the lunch room, and--you know--know their friend groups and watch them play sports and go to their games and things like that, but ultimately, um, you know...my skin color is different than in many of my students of color and I want them to know that [pause] there is a difference but I value them as individuals, and them, their culture, and their interests, and I do try everything in my power to individualize everything I do for my students, and that I might not be able to ever totally understand or, or get it, but I will continue to try to see things through their eyes.

**PI:** You mention your skin color is different. What is important about that? What does that mean?

**Teacher A:** Well I think--you know--sometimes students want to [pause] be able to connect to a authority figure or um, [pause] it, it, whether it be a teacher or coach and, and...to some students somebody that looks like them they're able to connect with on a different level. So, I sometimes feel like I'm almost at a disadvantage right away. And--you know--are my students going to let me in? Are they going to, um, [pause] are they going to share with me what they might share with somebody else? [<sup>9</sup>] And, um I would say most times I am able to make that connection with them. On a few occasions, it's been more difficult.

---

<sup>9</sup> I stay with Teacher A's meaning of skin color at this point in my analysis, but this line also begins to reveal Teacher A's rationale that students should initiate, be responsible for, or take the lead on the race analytic level of the teacher-student relationship. Note how she frames her students as active, rather than herself: "let me in" and "share with me." This early indicator becomes more elaborated in Teacher A's lesson 7 and lesson 8 (see Finding 2: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Text Practice).

Because she never named race in her discussion of “skin color,” I probed again and asked how she looked different. Teacher A still did not name race, but stated as a “first difference” between herself and her students, gender difference. She described herself as a “female” who teaches mostly “males” in a profession with more women than men. She recognized that “there is not enough males in the educational field.” On the heels of this point, Teacher A narrated seeing a television program about “violence in the city.” She recalled that many males in the television program she watched talked about the lack of males in their lives. “So many of these young men who have been affected by violence talked about lacking a male role model.” Trying to track the meaning of this unprompted narrative, I asked: “So skin color for you is about gender?” She replied, “No, I think that’s the biggest difference for me is being female.” I continue to seek her meaning of “skin color” by asking, “So what’s the significance of the skin color or looking different with regard to the skin color, beyond the gender that you just explained?” Teacher A launched another unprompted narrative she recalled, a narrative which lasted about three minutes. “Well--you know--I had a student....” At the end of this narrative, I stopped seeking her meaning indirectly and sought her meaning more directly, “And the reason why I keep asking about the skin color, um, is because I want to make sure that I’m not assuming that it has to do with race, because you haven’t stated it yet. So, is the skin color important because of racial difference between you and your students or skin color is important for other reasons?” At last, Teacher A stated her meaning directly: “Well, I do think it is important because of racial differences, because there’s a cultural difference.” She then offered as an example of cultural difference. Referring to the second unprompted narrative, she offered up that she had the experience of seeing first hand that a Black male student’s family norms were different from her

own family experience. “The way his family celebrated [births] was different than, um, a [baby dedication] that I have been to with my family and [when] we’ve [celebrated] someone’s life.”

Having now a clearer statement of her meaning, I asked: “So you’re saying it is a racial difference, and those racial differences then result in cultural differences?” She replied,

“Yes, I guess....I think, um, what I, what I see the biggest is the cultural difference and, and, and, and, that is so important for the whole child [*naturalizing* genre of race?]. You know, they’re with us six hours a day. But they have a whole nother [<sup>10</sup>] life at home. And if... everybody’s home life is different. Whether you’re male, female, Asian, Hispanic, whatever [*labeling* genre of race]. Everybody’s home life is different. But, um, [pause] I just think that I, I try my best to know what they’re going through. And what, ah, what their home life is like and, and I, I think culturally that would be the biggest difference.”

I sensed that she was a bit uncomfortable with her response. To reassure her, I explained that my follow ups were not about concluding, rather about resisting concluding and not assuming. “If I’m ever unclear, I’m just gonna stop and ask (chuckle). I’m not gonna assume. I’m just gonna ask for clarity.”

As is evident in this entry pre-interview, Teacher A is very much aware of what I term as the race analytic level of teaching practice. This is evidenced by all of the transcription above, but particularly this line:

---

<sup>10</sup> I noted some familiar Black language usage as I analyzed Teacher A’s language in this data set. I did not pursue this angle in this report, but future re-analyses may bear out some important findings along these lines, especially since this White woman showed no identification with Black cultural practices, personally or professionally.

**Teacher A:** ...to some students somebody that looks like them they're able to connect with on a different level.

What level is Teacher A referring to? Or as I analyze it, what layer of the situation is she referring to? Teacher A is speaking of the racial layer of teaching, which is different from the instructional layer of teaching.

Also, the logic of 'we are all different, but the same' within her conceptualization of race is used, as Di Angelo (2011) described above. She is also adept at avoiding race as a professional educator because she is viewing race as a potential pitfall. She attests this point by the end of the investigation as she begins to evidence racial literacies practice.

**Teacher A:** You know, I'm not...I can't remember exactly what I had written or circled or whatever before [during the Entry Interview], but I think--you know--after our experience together I would be more inclined to consider race and ethnicity and nationality when planning. And, and I think--you know--a lot of...It's kind of the conversation today. Like, some people feel that it's taboo to talk about these sort of things or that it's a bad thing to consider. But, you know...those things make up who we are and, and our background.

By sharing this later, Teacher A makes it clear that she was aware of how to navigate the taboo around engaging in "talk about these sort of things."

Additionally, Teacher A reveals that she has a deficit racial storyline with regard to her racially different (mostly Black and male) students' lives "...I try my best to know what they're going through. And what, ah, what their home life is like...." It is as if she thinks of school as an oasis from these children's tumultuous home lives. This certainly may be true for some of her

Black students, but it's unlikely to be true for all of her Black students and this deficit racial storyline absolutely should not be the lens through which she views Black children in general.

In this interview, Teacher A is acting and reacting with tacit awareness of the immediate and broader racial situation. Prior to this interview and during this interview she evidenced that she was acting and reacting to both the instructional and racial analytic layers of teaching practice with the common sense view of race and the conceptualization that race is problematic, specifically risky/tricky. For example, even when it is almost impossible to misunderstand her racial meaning of "skin color," she carefully sidesteps a direct acknowledgment of her meaning by raising a series of unprompted narratives (evasion practice). Once she has no other avenues to turn down in avoidance of her own racial meaning, only then does she acknowledge her racial meaning. Yet, even then she slips her foot out of the racial shoe by turning race into a softer "cultural" equivalent: "Well, I do think [skin color] is important because of racial differences, because there's a cultural difference" (evasion practice by equating race with culture). These pre-interview evasion practices suggest that race and her conceptualization of race was already in progress before I observed her lessons.

#### *Teacher A: Conceptualization of Race in Lesson Interviews*

On day four of instruction (lesson four), neither the racial identity of the student nor that of the teacher was raised as a consideration of teaching and learning. This was also true of the days and lessons which preceded day four of instruction.

With the absence of race practice evidence in mind, during the lesson interview I introduced a new question from my question bank about whether Teacher A felt the need to

guard against bringing race, in any way, into the practicum or the study. In short, she replied that she did not feel this way.

**Teacher A:** “Um, I don’t think so, no. All the lesson planning, all of the preparation, has been really focused on [Black boy’s name] as a student, and his interests, um. I don’t know a ton about his family life, or culture, or anything like that--and I’m not going, again, I’m not going to drill into [it] and try and figure that out. So, I’m using what I do know about him to kind of plan and prepare and um, I don’t believe race has been a factor into what we’ve been doing together.”

I followed up by asking why race was “irrelevant,” to which she replied, “I wouldn’t say it’s...” and she trailed off without repeating my word, “irrelevant.” She went on to explain,

**Teacher A:** “I don’t know, I just think that, you know, a lot of our instruction in this course has been, um, a focus on a student led--trying to figure out who these students are and how they learn, how they process literature, um, what their interests are--and that’s, you know, again like we talked before, it’s really the student focus. And that’s what’s come up in conversation. You know, yesterday, I dove into a little bit about, you know, somethings you just have to let the student share with you. You just have to let them express in their time. In two weeks time, I’m not sure I’m going to understand [chuckle] the nitty gritty of [Black boy’s name], um, life outside of school or outside of this. I’m doing the best I can to make things, you know, engaging and interesting to him, but um, I don’t know if I would say ‘irrelevant’ per say, but--I don’t love that word--but I think that, you know, the focus has been to engage the students based on their interests and also

be a learning experience for us to kind of understand how some of these assessments work and how to, you know, write some of the reports and things like that. Um, so that's kinda been the focus of, um, of our work together here."

In this response, we see the preference is to "let the student share with you," in other words, to let the student initiate or take the lead rather than leading the student into certain areas—in this case the realm of race. We also see that the instruction layer is the focus, the safe focus, for this teacher. She is aware of the race layer, but she is unwilling to lead her Black boy into race related matters. So, the race layer was a factor, but in her judgment it was better left aside, unless the student took the lead into that apparently less safe terrain, terrain that appeared to be unsafe from the teacher's perspective (*race as risky/tricky*).

When I checked in with Teacher A, it was clear that she did not see herself as guarding against raising race or racial identity, be it her own or her student's. She saw herself as simply being student-focused. Race wasn't raised by the student, therefore, race wasn't something to give attention to (*race as dispensable/inessential*). She also explained that a longer term teacher-student relationship would certainly bring out racial identity and race related matters at some point. This frames race as something that takes time to get to, it's apparently not something which might be an immediate matter of teacher-student relationship (*race as dispensable/inessential*). At first glance, this is a reasonable approach. When you look closer, though, this approach is inconsistent with the logic of teaching and learning in general, especially a Vygotskian approach to learning. For example, Teacher A did not wait to build teacher-student relationship upon other aspects of the multiple identities that she and her student had (e.g. as hockey fans), the commonalities between her and her student, or whatever differences there were

between her and her student. Further, Teacher A did not only lead her student into the literacy practices, knowledge, and skills that he expressed interest in. She decided, in some ways without his expressed interest, that there were some things that he needed to know as a learner. She then carried out instruction, lead him as a more capable other, with those goals in mind in ways that she hoped he would find engaging and meaningful. In other words, Teacher A initiated, took the lead, and offered this Black boy support with regard to these instruction layer matters and even with matters of teacher-student rapport building. When it came to the race layer, however, she reasoned that it took time to broach race and that she should only address what he expressed interest in, with the obvious possibility that if he never expressed interest in racial matters—even if it was in his best interest to develop insights on some race related issues—these would not be included in the instruction. Said another way, Teacher A would not take the lead with regard to developing racial literacies, but she would do so with developing other, apparently more essential, literacies. Clearly, something about the race layer brought her to this comparatively counter-intuitive logic. Teacher A is acting and reacting to her own conceptualization of race as *dispensable/inessential* and *race as risky/tricky* as she practices evasion.

The race event I opened up with my new question allowed some evidence of this teacher's actions and reactions to the race layer of the situation to surface. Teacher A's logic to lead the student within the instructional layer and to, quite oppositely, be lead by the student when it came to the race layer, proved to be important in this study. As I report in "Finding 2: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Text Practice," Teacher A did not question the racial meanings and race practices of the texts she selected. She also stated in those lesson interviews that she was not willing to probe or raise race-related issues beyond those that the text offered or



that her student introduced. From the standpoint of racial justice and developing racial literacies, this teacher's text practice and evasion practice resulted in lost opportunities to teach both comprehension and the culture and consequences of race practice in the U.S., specifically in the National Hockey League.

*Teacher B: Conceptualization of Race in Lesson Interviews and Lesson*

In post-lesson interview three, Teacher B reported that the Black girl she was assigned to teach was interested in texts with lead characters who were "female" and "minority."

**Teacher B:** [Black girl] definitely mentioned a few of her [book] favorites as having, um, female characters that were also minority characters [*labeling* genre of race], ethnically. So she mentioned Moana, specifically. And I believe that racially [Moana] would be, you know, identified as Asian or Pacific Islander [*labeling* genre of race]. Um, we talked about Mulan would be an Asian character [*labeling* genre of race]. Um, so, I think not only focusing on one type of female lead character but incorporating, you know, especially minority groups into that planning. I think that would be, be wise and would be engaging for her...[affirmative head nod] and powerful for her.

Teacher B is clear about her student's preference for books with female, minority characters. But even as she explains this, she begins to push for nonspecific minorities, all minorities so to speak, even though she identified her student as a Black girl later in this same interview. What text selections, then, did Teacher B make for her literacy lessons after this interview?

In lesson four, one of the three lessons nominated by Teacher B for this study, she selected *Bink and Gollie* (DiCamillo, McGhee, & Fucile, 2010) and what Teacher B termed as

“Girl Power Quotes.” Why? Teacher B reported that she had more familiarity with *Bink and Gollie* (DiCamillo et al., 2010) (although she had never read these books) than she had with books that featured Black girl characters. This raised the issue of time pressures and the need for teachers to have a range of texts which could be called to mind as quick pulls, texts that are already a part of the teacher’s text selection repertoire. Teacher B explained that she “stumbled upon” a project created by an “11-year old student from New Jersey and it’s her mission to find and collect authentic texts for Black girls.” Teacher B went on to explain that this 11-year old student had compiled a list of books that featured Black girls. She had just learned about this 11-year old’s book project, which Teacher B described as “1000 Black girl books” (@iammarleydias; #1000BlackGirlBooks). Teacher B expressed support for this student’s “1000 Black girl books” project. She even criticized that it has taken this long to bring such a list to the forefront of children’s texts.

**Teacher B:** “It’s sad that it’s twenty seventeen and this is, you know, just becoming [pause], it’s just kind of at the forefront now. Whereas, I mean, we’ve always, we’ve always been a diverse society. Why wasn’t it at the forefront much earlier? So, I mean, more power to that young lady for bringing it to the forefront and for sharing it. Because I think, you know, not only for myself but for other educators, that’s going to prove very helpful.”

So how did this 11-year old student generated, “1000 Black girl books” list (<https://grassrootscommunityfoundation.org/1000-black-girl-books-resource-guide/>) and the text selections for the remaining literacy practicum lessons turn out in the case of Teacher B and her Black, girl student? In short, Teacher B continued with *Bink and Gollie* (DiCamillo et al., 2010)

until they finished this text, included readings from S.A.R.K. (2004), planned to include the “A Mighty Girl” website ([www.amightygirl.com](http://www.amightygirl.com)) and *Grace for President* (DiPucchio & Pham, 2008)—but a student absence occurred—and Teacher B expressed regrets in her exit interview that she never got to the Black girl book, *Grace for President* (DiPucchio & Pham, 2008), she had hoped to include. Lesson seven is described in the next section, the final full instructional day that Teacher B had with this Black girl due to this student’s late arrival on day eight and her unexpected absence on day nine.

Certainly, student absences were a major limitation of the instructional time available (see Data Sources), but Teacher B might have moved to *Grace for President* (DiPucchio & Pham, 2008) rather than the SARK (2004) readings with the instructional time that was available. In her post-instruction interview on day nine, Teacher B also mentioned that the assessment process of the practicum took up a lot of instructional time. From my vantage point, Teacher B may not have had a solid understanding of how to use the practicum assessments, assessments which were required in order to ensure that this cohort of future reading specialists had experience with carrying out and interpreting assessment for diagnostic instruction. If this is the case (I did not inquire), this would bring attention to how complications or breakdowns at the instruction layer of teaching practice (e.g. use of assessments) might have a compounding influence upon however a teacher might be acting and reacting to the race layer of teaching practice. Ideally, teachers would carry out productive practices at both of these analytic layers of teaching.

Some readers might conclude that Teacher B just didn’t know about texts that featured Black girls, that this teacher ran out of time, and that she had every intention of including Black

girl books in her instruction with her Black girl student. Perhaps. I conclude, with the body of evidence I collected, that Teacher B practiced evasion—evasion paved with good intentions, but evasion practice nonetheless. She conceptualized race as less essential than gender. Teacher B did not miss opportunities to engage her Black girl’s gender identity, but somehow, she never got around to her Black student’s racial identity as a girl. We also see inconsistency between her declared views (“*I think that would be, be wise and would be engaging for her...*[affirmative head nod] *and powerful for her.*” and “*Why wasn’t it at the forefront much earlier?*”) and her teaching practice with regard to engaging race. As Teacher B practiced evasion of race, she conceptualized *race as dispensable/inessential* while unapologetically emphasizing “girl power.” This brought to my mind the question, which racial group(s) of girls does Teacher B imagine as having real power?

#### *Teacher B: Lesson Seven*

On day seven of instruction, Teacher B focused on “Words or vocabulary,” according to my observation notes. She generally followed the lesson structure that she outlined on day two of instruction except that she was still including assessments. The assessment she carried out was a “Word Meaning Test” which consisted of asking the student to “Tell me what this word means.” As I noted on other occasions, Teacher B paused to read the assessment materials, doubled back at times, and even read things to guide herself through processes. This continued to give me the impression that “She may not be familiar with how to do this assessment.”

Prior to and after this assessment chunk of the lesson, Teacher B made clear references to the Black girl’s gender identity. In one episode, she may have even made reference to racial

identity in the form of remarking about the Black girl's hair. During the Scrabble Juniors game, played before the assessment, I noted:

Black girl's hair style as a "bun" is mentioned by the teacher: "Ah, she's wearing a bun, I'll make the word bun." [Teacher was explaining her word addition to student]

Otherwise, the Black girl's gender identity was the only focus. Right after the note about the word "bun," I went on to describe this:

Student adds "pom" to the board and teacher explains the juice "POM" as a way to make the word added work in the game. I am very doubtful that this word will help Black girl's vocabulary. Teacher suggests a very "[Black girl's name] word." She goes on to say, "We're always talking about girl power and what it's like to be a girl. Which of these letters could we use to make a word that related to being a girl or being a female person?" Scrabble Juniors is mentioned as their "go to game" by the teacher.

I agree with Teacher B's characterization of how she identified her student, as a girl but not as a Black girl.

After the assessment chunk, Teacher B introduces a "Girl power quote; Reviewed a previous quote: 'She thought she could so she did.'" The new quote was "Here sleeps a girl with a head full of magical dreams; a heart full of wonder; and hands that will shape the world." Teacher B asked the Black girl what she thought this meant and thoroughly discussed the meaning of the quote with her. After the discussion, Teacher B admonished the Black girl as noted in the observation instrument, including my own thoughts:

“Keep it up with that spirit, cause you will grow up to do big things. Especially, whatever, whatever you want you will be able to do it. Do you agree with that? Anything else you want to say about this quote?” How might adding a racial analysis to this teacher’s gender identification of her student change her admonition?

I wrote my comment out of worry that an intersectional view of this Black girl was lacking. I did not, and still do not, believe that this Black girl’s future was determined by race practice. I believe that her life is situated by race practice, namely anti-Black, White superordinate race practice in the United States of America (hooks, 2000). This Black girl was always already capable of unimaginably good outcomes, yet (as a Black father) I knew that the racial situations which she would need to navigate well were real. Was Teacher B’s single, rather than intersectional, view of this Black girl setting this child up for more difficulties than were even necessary? It may not, ultimately, matter what this teacher said or didn’t say, I have no way of knowing if this Black girl even internalized this teacher’s words. Still, the literature on intersectionality suggests that only preparing this Black girl to face life on gendered terms, rather than on both gendered and raced terms, is a dereliction of duty. As Alice Walker (2011) noted decades ago in a 1972 convocation talk,

However, the young person leaving college today, especially if she is a woman, must consider the possibility that her best offerings will be considered a nuisance to the men who also occupy her field. And then, having considered this, she would do well to make up her mind to fight *whoever* would stifle her growth with as much courage and tenacity as Mrs. Hudson fights the Klan. If she is black and

coming out into the world she must be doubly armed, doubly prepared. Because for her there is not simply a new world to be gained, there is an old world that must be reclaimed. There are countless vanished and forgotten women who are nonetheless eager to speak to her—from Frances Harper and Anne Spencer to Dorothy West—but she must work to find them, to free them from their neglect and the oppression of silence forced upon them because they were black and they were women. (p. 23)

Observing Teacher B evade this Black girl's racial identity made Walker's wise words all the more prescient, in that this Black girl was not aided in becoming "doubly armed, doubly prepared." Related to Alice Walker's appeal, Teacher B orchestrated a situation wherein this Black girl would have to work to find her own way with regard to her racial identity. Given how Teacher B conceptualized race, and the fact that she lacked the racial literacies needed to support this Black girl, it might actually be a good thing that she didn't engage this Black girl's racial identity during this study. Perhaps some harm was avoided in the larger scheme of things.

As I continued to note the instructional moves this teacher was (not) making in this lesson, I began to generate a general impression of all the instruction I had observed over the entire practicum. I came to see that Teacher B was not only missing opportunities to help her Black girl student develop racial literacies, she was also missing opportunities to help this Black girl develop print literacies. For example, Teacher B introduced a "Color coded word meaning strips activity to indicate how much the student knows about each word on the strip before and after reading." These color coded words were taken from the *Bink and Gollie* (DiCamillo et al., 2010) chapter "P.S. I'll Be Back Soon." I noted:

Bink and Gollie book is opened on the device. Short read aloud by teacher. Stop to ask what “journey” means. Ironically, Timbuktu, the place of one of the first universities in human history, is mentioned in Bink and Gollie’s “P.S. I’ll Be Back Soon.” The short reads (teacher and student), with stops to talk about each previewed word’s possible synonym, continues for over 15 minutes. This simple strategy [referring to “insert a synonym” strategy] could have been taught much faster and with far less explanation.

This note illustrates the loss of valuable time that I felt this teacher was orchestrating. I discussed this very concern in another note:

Teacher opens book [referring to Jennifer Serravallo’s (2015) *Reading Strategies Book*] and reads the section of the book that discusses this strategy [referring to “insert a synonym” strategy], pointing to the text with the child to introduce the strategy. Teacher appears to be reading the text description to the Black girl verbatim. At this late in point the practicum, this seems misplaced and looks like unskilled teaching. After going through the text verbatim with the Black girl, she closes Serravallo’s book and asks, “Are you ready to give this a try?” Before this question, the Black girl demonstrated that she understood the strategy by interjecting a synonym as the teacher read from the book.

As I expressed, I did not see the instruction which Teacher B was providing, at that late point in the practicum, as adequate instruction. I was so concerned, that I even noted that Teacher B remarked about finishing “7 minutes early.” I noted other troubling comments after they “finished” early:



Teacher B is using her mother's Kindle device and mom suggested a game for the lesson due to a discussion Teacher B had with her mom about teaching the Black girl. Scrabble on the device. Closing comment: "Well, I am so glad that my mom suggested that. Cause that's fun, isn't it?"

Upon reflection, I connected these signs of concern to a note about the SARK book discussion that had become routine by lesson seven:

Teacher reads aloud SARK book with discussion interspersed; Katherine Hepburn's experience; being brave is mentioned along with "fake it til you make it"; "micromovements" helped a woman to recover from an injury; SARK mentioned micromovements in making life progress; What "micromovements" can be used in developing racial literacies?

My connections between these missed opportunities to develop racial literacies and these missed opportunities to develop print literacies is best summarized in a final note from the observation instrument:

As raceless as this lesson might appear, the entire occurrence is race avoidance, one big evasion practice. This is not to say that race is salient at all times across the lesson. Rather, it is to say that even when race might reasonably become salient, it is evaded. Further, the literacy instruction that is provided seemed to be "micromovements" of progress, small moves that took way more time than it should have, and thus wasted valuable instructional time. In this lesson, not only does the teacher miss the opportunity to help this Black girl develop racial literacies, the teacher also missed opportunities to develop print literacies. If there

was progress, it was micromovements toward developing print literacies and no movements toward developing racial literacies.

In short, Teacher B's (independently nominated) lesson seven was evidence of evasion practice while missing opportunities to develop both the print and racial literacies of a Black girl.

Throughout this lesson, with scant evidence of race production (hair "bun") and with unapologetic attention to this Black girl's gender identity, Teacher B conceptualized race as *dispensable/inessential*.

#### *Across Cases of Teachers A & B: Interviews and Lessons*

Both teachers evidenced evasion practice in interviews and lessons. In fact, Teacher A practiced evasion in two of the three lessons she nominated (lesson 7 & 8) while conceptualizing *race as is* (see Finding 2: Teacher's Race Conceptualization in Text Practice). Teacher B also practiced evasion in her nominated lessons (lesson 4 & 7) while focusing on gender. Given this evidence, both teachers practiced evasion and revealed multiple conceptualizations of race between their cases.

**Table 14: Conceptualizations of Race in Evasion Practice and Race Coding Grid for Teacher A & B**

Race as Common Sense	Race as Risky/Tricky	Race as Dispensable/Inessential	Race as "Is"	Race as Sensible
Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A	
Race Event				

Teacher A & Teacher B		
<b>Labeling</b>  Teacher A Teacher B	<b>Social Classing</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Naming</b>	<b>Vindicating</b>	<b>Placializing</b>
<b>Naturalizing</b> ?	<b>Common Sensing</b>	<b>Sciencing</b>

### Practice and Conceptualization Shifts

This study was not designed to investigate intervention in teachers’ practices or their conceptualizations of race. This makes shifts in Teachers’ practices and conceptualizations all the more important to identify. Findings 4 and 5 are both related to shifts, but in one case (Teacher B) the shifts reveal dysconscious practice and in the other (Teacher A) the shifts reveal racial literacies practice (see Appendix A, p. 207).

#### 4.1.4 Finding 4: Teachers’ Race Conceptualization in Dysconscious Practice

##### *Teacher B: Conceptualization Across Entry and Exit Interviews*

After comparing this teacher’s pre- and post-SIT task responses from her entry pre-interview and her exit post-interview, she dropped race from her initial list of the student identities which was “most important” to her when creating literacy lessons. Other changes from the pre-SIT task included dropping sexuality, economic status, and (dis)ability as student identities that she considered when planning literacy instruction. There was also change in the “Other identities” that she added to the SIT task list, namely “school affiliation(s)” and

“extracurricular affiliation(s),” rather than only “affinity groups.” Figure 5 shows the pre- and post-SIT task results.

**Figure 5. Teacher B Pre- and Post-SIT Task Responses**

*Interview B*

**Pre-Interview Task**

Outstanding teachers, like yourself, consider a number of things when they are helping their students. These factors include student identities. Some examples of student identities are listed on this sheet, but there may be other student identities beyond these to consider. When teachers are preparing for instruction, they may think about any number of student identities to help their students learn.

**Students' Multiple Identities**

nationality	ethnicity
race	citizenship status
age	gender
sexuality	(dis)ability
economic status	academic designation(s)
language	neighborhood/community affiliation(s)
Other identities:	
1. School affiliation(s)	
2. Extracurricular affiliation(s)	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

*Post Interview B*

**Post-Interview Task**

Outstanding teachers, like yourself, consider a number of things when they are helping their students. These factors include student identities. Some examples of student identities are listed on this sheet, but there may be other student identities beyond these to consider. When teachers are preparing for instruction, they may think about any number of student identities to help their students learn.

**Students' Multiple Identities**

nationality	ethnicity
race	citizenship status
age	gender
sexuality	(dis)ability
economic status	academic designation(s)
language	neighborhood/community affiliation(s)
Other identities:	
1. Affinity groups	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Given this reported change in the significance of students' racial identity to this teachers' instructional planning, it is reasonable to examine how this change occurred through her interviews.

#### Entry Pre-Interview

When I asked my prepared follow up question about the survey question that focused on her experience teaching diverse students, Teacher B spoke at length about a fourth grade, Mexican-American boy with autism. Language use and gender were the two main aspects she used in her description of this student. Teacher B never mentioned race as a way of identifying this 9 or 10-year-old student (*race as dispensable/inessential*). When I asked about the Special

Education program to which she was referring, she shared that about 20% of the school was assigned to Special Education in the public magnet school where she once worked. In her view, people moved into that neighborhood around this school because of the school quality. She also explained that the demographics of this public school was about 80% racially White with mostly middle to high income, but some lower income, families (*race as common sense* and *labeling*). She made no connections to the possibility that parents' perception of school quality was a function of the racial demographics she offered about this public school (*race as is*). Teacher B went on to explain that her current private school *differed* from the public school where she had previously taught. Although she reported both settings as majority racially White schools (80% and over 90% respectively), she described the public school as "heterogenous" and the private school as "homogenous." She did not see these schools as similar. Referring to her thoughts about the pre-SIT task, she shared,

**Teacher B:** Ok, well, first of all I thought about how different it was from [the prior school] setting to [the new school] setting. Because, I mean I see a more heterogeneous group--you know--at my, at my previous setting. So I would--you know--try to touch upon all of these things [referring to the SIT task identities list]. Whereas, there's definitely a more homogenous mix of students at my new setting. And I don't find myself considering as many of these factors.

Whereas I see these schools as very similar based on her description, she clearly sees these schools as different. In fact, these two schools are so different to Teacher B that she reports not even considering students' racial and even some other identities as she plans instruction at her new school, a dysconscious practice.

Later, in the exit interview, she revealed that her first teaching job at the public school to which she referred was a watershed moment for her. Although her description of this public school during the entry interview suggested that the population of this school was majority racially White, the percentage of racially White students at this school was not as high as she was accustomed to in her own elementary, middle, high school, and even undergraduate college experience. She reported this information about her own schooling experiences also in the exit interview. This suggested to me that all majority racially White school populations are not necessarily experienced in the same way racially. It would seem that there are upper and lower thresholds of being a “majority White school” which may bring about qualitatively different racial experiences for White teachers. In retrospect, a useful question that I might have asked during this interview is ‘how White’ each of these majority White schooling situations were for Teacher B. Without question, the majority White public school where she first taught was a shock to her racial experience. This background information contextualized the dysconscious practices that Teacher B evidenced and the way she conceptualized race during this investigation.

When I asked her about the significance of her own identities in teaching, she focused on her affinity affiliations, her passions, and sensitivity to (dis)abilities, due to her own brother’s (dis)abilities. She also expressed a commitment to not using gender stereotypes when teaching her students. This implied that her own gender was significant to her teaching. Consistent with what we saw above, race was not mentioned in her discussion of her own identities as a teacher (*race as dispensable/inessential*). Given that she did not mention race until I prompted her to do so during the entry pre-interview, her inclusion of race in her pre-SIT task responses (written

during this interview!) does not fit with her interview language. In other words, I found inconsistency between this teacher's written and spoken language during the same event, yet she never appeared to note or question this inconsistency. Such lack of self-awareness is dysconscious practice.

When I examined her entry interview, Teacher B evidenced that she created an inverse relationship between student demographics and student identities. The higher the apparent student homogeneity, the fewer student identities she considered. The lower the apparent student homogeneity, the more student identities she considered. This also suggested something about how important her own identities were in her teaching. On one hand, if she also saw herself as similar to her homogenous students, less of her own identities seemed to matter. On the other hand, if she saw herself as different from her heterogeneous students, more of her own identities seemed to matter. From this perspective, then, racial identity is not absent for this teacher; race is perceived as dispensable or inessential in certain situations. According to her, both schools are predominately racially White, with the difference being that the private school population was constituted by even higher income families than the public school where she once taught. As she has described the racial demography in these two particular settings—settings that I see as racially similar—one might expect for her to think of race as dispensable or inessential, both for her students and herself because everyone is just racially White. However, racial difference between her students and herself was a stated factor for this teacher, especially in the majority racially White *public* school. As she explains herself, this does not add up. Yet again, Teacher B did not seem to note or question these points. Thus, Teacher B evidenced red flag inconsistencies when approaching the race practice layer of teaching practice.

In sum, my pre-interview with Teacher B evidenced that she viewed *race as common sense, as is*, and as *dispensable or inessential* (or at least wanted it to appear so). Her acknowledgement of race (after I included it in a verbal list of how she might describe her students and her schools), without giving race importance or emphasis, fits with her survey responses and even the change evidenced in the post-SIT task. By the time we completed this study together, we had used chunks of interview time to discuss race. After such sustained time spent on race, her worldview would not allow race to be centered for her students or herself in the post-SIT task. She easily acknowledged race in writing, while making little to no mention of race verbally. Yet, after our sustained attention to race during the study, she would not mark race as “most important” in the SIT Task as she had initially. Thus, this acknowledged-but-dispensable disposition toward race may have been another form of *race as risky/tricky* evidenced by dysconscious practice, due to her particular experiences with race as a child and as an adult. As with Teacher A, race was a potential pitfall for Teacher B. The evidence here, as above, suggests that Teacher B was also acting and reacting to the race analytic level of teaching practice before and during our interview. Teacher B, as Teacher A, was aware of the immediate and broader racial situation as she participated in our pre-interview.

In the case of Teacher B, by the end of the study it was evident that she continued dysconscious practice and conceptualized *race as common sense, risky/tricky, dispensable/inessential*, and *race as is*. She did, however, begin to show signs of questioning *race as is*, yet she did not take her questioning far enough to suggest to me that she conceptualized *race as sensible* during data collection. During the data analysis member check with Teacher B, she seemed to have moved further toward



conceptualizing *race as sensible*. Longitudinal data would have characterized whether her conceptualization made other shifts.

#### Exit Post-Interview

When I asked Teacher B what else came to mind as she completed the post-SIT task, she returned to the homogeneous versus heterogeneous language that I drew from her conceptualization in our entry interview. Initially, however, she focused on how the number of students being taught influenced her teaching practice.

**Teacher B:** Even if you have a group of two, three, four kids; if you have boys and girls and--you know--they have various backgrounds, that's gonna look very different than planning for just one student. It's in a way a little bit more challenging to meet the needs of more students than one.

That is, she spoke of the difficulty of attending to various student identities when teaching a group or a classroom of students who are seen as heterogeneous. She also discussed the flip side of the coin, namely, that she thought that teaching a group or a classroom of students who are seen as homogenous would make it easier to attend to student identities, in that there is less of a spread of difference to span.

**Teacher B:** Well, and, on the flip side of that coin: If you are in a school or if your group, even--you know--, is a population that is more homogenous; well then you might be able to replicate that experience a little bit. You know, if you're working with a group that's, say, --you know--all Hispanic boys, right? Cause, I, I'm thinking one of my teacher friends, she's a Special Ed teacher and she has a class of like six Hispanic boys. So then, you know, not to say that their interests

and things would be all the same, but if you're looking at that--you know--that racial or ethnic piece--you know--then you might be able to kinda find something--you know--similar.

Teacher B is restating the homogenous versus heterogenous model that she evidenced at the beginning of the study. In this end of study formulation, though, there is elaboration that drew my attention to a fallacy that she was caught in: categories arise from student characteristics. Teacher B was evidencing the *naturalizing* racial genre. In fact, categories were being attributed to human beings who were as unique as their fingerprints—no two human beings are homogenous, much less a group or a classroom of human beings. The fallacy Teacher B was allowing me to notice through her elaboration helped me to realize that homogenous versus heterogenous was being imposed upon human plentitude. The category itself was doing the work, not the student characteristics, per se. Applied to the race practice analytic level of teaching practice, race categories invited her to see Hispanic students, Black students, or White students as homogenous and to see mixtures of these students as heterogeneous. The fact of the matter is that heterogeneity exists among each of these racial groups. She acknowledged that homogenous was not the same as uniform, but still for her, homogeneous was a reliable way to name the sameness she was describing.

**Teacher B:** Yeah and I think--you know--especially as we are teasing this idea [of homogenous] out...I mean it's still important to recognize and celebrate the individuality of the students, even within that category. Um, but again, in that broad sense in terms of like an all encompassing--you know--generalization, I think that's, that's why we, why we do it. It's not to say that everybody's exactly

the same--you know--who's a girl or who is Black or who is White or [*labeling*]  
you know--who is a Fifth Grader or ten year old. But it's, it's a star...I guess a  
starting point is what I'm trying to say. Yeah.

Yet, the fact of human plentitude shatters this heuristic and lays bare that racial categories are useful fictions in the routine of race practice. None of us really fits neatly, or even mostly, into the racial categories human culture has generated, yet how many imagine that we do? How many of us *naturalize* in day-to-day personal and professional life? This ongoing state of racial affairs is why I argue that both the race analytic level of teaching practice, and racial literacies for teaching, are so necessary.

Teacher B stated clearly that she did not think about her own identities when teaching. I asked her why this was so. She explained that she was “trying to focus on the students’ needs.” She elected to focus on what she reasoned would broadly appeal to her students, especially when she saw a group of students as diverse. This further evidenced her hesitation to center distinctiveness, especially racial distinctiveness, when she was faced with students she saw as diverse. Teacher B was more comfortable dealing with what she called “universal appeal” (dysconscious practice and *race as dispensable/inessential*). Even when she once had selected a text about a Chinese, female character to use with a group of Hispanic boys for whom she had planned instruction, her purpose was to lift up the universal theme, the “moral of the story” message, as she saw it. She did not view race as something that needed to be questioned in the text or in the instruction carried out with the text. Teacher B left race ‘as is’ in the text and in the instructional situation she described.

**Teacher B:** For example, um, when I taught Fourth and Fifth Grade, um self-contained Special Ed, we read a book about a character that was female and that was Chinese. And I did not have any female or Chinese students in my reading class. Um, but the value of the book just happened to be something--you know--that kind of tied in with the lessons of Fifth Grade, um we talked a lot about--you know--fitting in no matter who you are, um, and what that looks like and also considering--you know--being that "new guy" [air quotes] and having empathy for that situation and trying to be inclusive instead of bullying. Because the [book character] student was bullied, not only because she was the new kid, but because she was from China. And that, that wasn't what--you know--the, the kids in Brooklyn were used to [in the book]. So, even though none of my students could identify--you know--for example, with being female or with being Chinese, the value behind the text--you know--kinda the moral of the story was something that was relevant for them [her students].

**PI:** Um, hmm. There was a universal, if you will, message...

**Teacher B:** Right.

**PI:** That was deeper than just the particular ways that you could, um, describe the, the, the main character or the key characters of the story.

**Teacher B:** Right. Right. Yeah, exactly because I mean it could happen to anyone. You know, if, if one of my students, say the opposite was true, they went to China and they were--you know--in school in China, they might find the same

thing to be true. So yeah, it has that universal appeal. Everybody is going to be the so called "new guy" [air quotes] in the situation. So...[head nodding]. (*race as is*)

That racial discrimination might have been a factor in the book character's bullying was not a teachable moment for Teacher B, rather she opted for the universal message of being the "new guy" in a situation (*race as is*). We see that her world view foregrounds universalism, rather than difference. Teacher B assumed that "fitting in," even for her self-contained students, was inevitable and desirable. She never questioned what the cost of "fitting in" might be for the female Chinese character in the book she selected, for her own nonWhite students, or even herself (dysconscious practice). Her world view pictured our world as one wherein everyone is experiencing the same kinds of challenges and wherein anyone can "fit." The facts of human history, especially human history since the invention of race, had not yet shattered her model of social life.

I decided to follow her logic as far as I could to seek a better understanding of how she thought about her teaching practice.

**PI:** If you're not thinking about your different identities, what do you think about?

**Teacher B:** Again, going back to the, to that text that I mentioned. For me, especially when--you know--there is a theme involved or--you know--a moral of a story--it's how I'm going to convey that to students. So I'm more mindful of, ok well, here's--you know--a teachable moment. How am I going to--you know--model that for the students? Or, what kind of questioning am I going to use that will get them--you know--to that point? So that they can have meaningful

discussions with each other. Or I can facilitate a meaningful whole group discussion, um. So for me it's, it's more about teasing that out, teasing out like the, the teaching points, the teachable moments and getting students cognitively to whatever that may be.

**PI:** So it sounds like, and this is me bouncing it back, it sounds like you're thinking about technical aspects...what I could refer to as technical aspects...of, of teaching: Strategy, um, if there's a theme, um, [pause] metacognition...

**Teacher B:** Right, and like the...I was almost going to say too like the getting them to that, that higher order thinking. And--you know--like sss...a lot of scaffolding. Um, you know because we talk about--you know--just, just best practice in teaching. You know, you could tell the kids: "Well the moral of the story is this," but they're not gonna learn anything from that. So, yeah I think that, that metacognitive piece and kind of getting them to get there on their own, especially as kids get older, is, is the goal of good teachers.

**PI:** And so in that regard it would sound--and this is just me trying to make sure I'm following you--it sounds like it doesn't even matter who they are individually, as students. In terms of the particular thing you're trying to get done. Whether it's a skill or it's a theme or it's a strategy. It's not even about individual students, it's kinda like: those unique, particular differences among each student doesn't really matter. What's important is: Can you do this skill? Can you, can you show me that you understand this strategy? More technical kinds of things.

**Teacher B:** Yes, and no. I mean there's definitely--you know as teachers--standards we have to meet. But I was also thinking kind of the universality of it. Like, no matter who you are--you know--you should have empathy, you should be able to put yourself in someone else's shoes. Here is the lesson of the story, so it's not just "oh, well you can infer."--you know--"you can make text connections." You really kinda feel what that character is feeling and that take home is something that's going with you. So the next time--you know--there is a new kid in class, you know, you'll treat them with respect rather than shunning them. Um, cause I kinda go back to, as I mentioned at the beginning, that idea of--you know--of citizenship. And you know, in addition to...everybody loves the, the buzzwords of college and career readiness [air quotes], but I mean on the flip side of that coin, kinda looking at the whole child, and even the social emotional aspect: Getting kids ready to just be good humans--you know-grow up and be good people and--you know--have skills that go deeper than just--you know--reading and understanding a text.

**PI:** And so, now the question for me comes [pause]: What counts as being a good person? As you think about it?

**Teacher B:** Ahhmmm...I mean there's so many things that fall under that umbrella. Um, but in thinking about, actually my current school. It's an IB [International Baccalaureate] candidate school, so that's--you know--the International Baccalaureate program. And there are 12 different characteristics--you know--they focus on and they kind of embed within their teaching. And I

kinda think about that: You know, what is being open minded? You know, and how does that apply across all your subject areas? How does that apply in your life? You know, what is balanced? What is caring? So thinking about those core values and how you apply them, not just across your day as a student, in, in--you know--in, in doing school; but how do you internalize those and apply those and apply those no matter where you are? Again, kinda that global citizenship piece.

**PI:** And I think that what I'm starting to recognize as I listen to you closely is that: We're now down to the level of philosophy again. Right? We're dat--, we're back down to what we, what we think it means to be human. What counts as good. Um, things of that nature. And, I don't know if you've thought about this, but Imma mention this: A lot of that, or really all of it, has [pause] all of that is informed by culture. All of that is informed by, um, what has been given to you as normal or what is taboo, etcetera, right? Um, all of that is tied to what we would, what we could call world views, right? And because in, in the United States a part of our culture in the United States includes this thing called race, then race is implicated in how we think about what it means to be human, who counts as human or not, what it means to be a good person, um, who is regarded as acceptable or not acceptable and why that's the case. Race is, is apart of, it's all mashed up into that. And so, even if you're not necessarily trying to deal with race, could you...I guess



Imma ask it this way: Would you agree that race is already kind of involved in it?<sup>11</sup>

**Teacher B:** I get what you're saying...yeah, yeah cause it's not like explicitly--you know--addressed but one thing that contributes to--you know--kinda this global citizenship idea is being accepting of, of all and--you know--yeah viewing race as a piece of that, you're right, yeah. [toward questioning *race as is*]

**PI:** Because when we think about, um, again these kind of big philosophical ideas, um, you could raise the question: Well, where did they come from?

**Teacher B:** True.

**PI:** Right? So, are we talking about African philosophies? Are we talking about Western European philosophies? Are we talking about...do you understand what I'm saying? Are these philosophers men? Are these philosophers women? You know, so like, where did--you could raise the question--well where did we get these big ideas from? Where did we get these big, important values of what it means to be a good human being...well where did they come from? Right? And so my--you know--my point in saying that is--you know--um, is trying to unpack where I hear philosophy coming up again in, in what you're talking about. But I'm not sure...I wasn't sure as I was listening to you, if you heard or, or were seeing where race is involved in that.

---

<sup>11</sup> I now see that by this point in the investigation, I was not strictly interviewing, but was also openly questioning dysconscious practice. This potential bias can be traced back to my philosophical stance as a post-White, vindicationist literacy researcher. Future re-analyses of this collected data and longitudinal use of my question bank might inform intervention studies of teaching practice designed to develop racial literacies.

**Teacher B:** Oh, yeah. I know it's embedded in it for sure. Absolutely.

As it became clearer to me, Teacher B understood her teaching practice as serving her students' needs, even as being oriented toward the "whole child," and yet she was excluding the race practice level of teaching and ignoring the racialized situation in which her students were living. She even opted to see potential racial discrimination in the text she selected as a universal challenge the character was having with "fitting in." Teacher B was committed to the dysconscious practice of seeing her teaching practice as only about the instructional practice level and not at all about, or as a last resort about, the race practice level.

Teacher B expressed that this study helped her to see the importance of attending to students' identities. She even felt that the study showed her that attending to multiple identities gave her a "whole picture" of the child, something she values. Yet, as before, racial identity was not mentioned as a puzzle piece.

**PI:** Um, What are you taking away from this study? What from this study will stick with you as you continue your teaching career?<sup>12</sup>

**Teacher B:** Mmm...Just being mindful of how identities play into what I do. And--you know--maybe it's not again, as we talked about earlier, pigeon holing someone or stereotyping based off of their identity, but, a thought I had earlier was almost how those identities kind of pile on top of...well not even pile on top, but kind of...more like a puzzle, like link into each other and show you the whole picture. That's a much better way of putting it.

---

<sup>12</sup> This question was not an attempt at intervention. Rather, it was raised out of considering whether the study benefited the participants. I have evidence of conversations that show my focus was on whether the participants benefited from this investigation. My hope was that they did benefit, but I asked them about this to find out their views.

**PI:** Ok

**Teacher B:** Um, so--you know--and being able to tap into that still in an organic way by getting to know students and finding out what's important, as I usually do, but maybe just being more mindful of the fact that you actually can--you know--say: Well it's not just because--you know--that Jimmie--you know--likes x, y, z that the book is about; its' because--you know--he's in a household where--you know--this is, this is important because this is a value that he has in his religion, or--you know--this a value that is typically held by people of his socioeconomic status or--you know--whatever the case may be.

**PI:** Um, hm. Um, hm. Ok.

**Teacher B:** So just kind of tying, ok, this is, this is the interest or this is, this is what's relatable to the student and it can be tied back to an identity.

This interview response is a snapshot of the risky/tricky conceptualization that I had begun to take note of by the end of this study and it also suggests a moment of questioning *race as dispensable/inessential*. Still, she does not go as far as Teacher A, however, in conceptualizing *race as sensible*. Having noted that Teacher B (and Teacher A) was very careful about engaging race during data collection, I added key questions to my question bank, including the question that I asked immediately after the exchange above.

**PI:** And, this study has given explicit attention to students' various social identities, but especially race.

**Teacher B:** Um, hmm.

**PI:** Has this made you think more about your own social identities as a teacher?

Tell me about this.

Teacher B replied that while she felt that she was more open about diversity because of significant experiences which broadened her worldview, including this study, she was concerned that students may not be as open as she has become. In short, she shifted the focus of the question from her own identities, including the one she is least willing to bring up, to how students might unfairly misread her identities, especially her racial identity. This shift was a very complex, confusing move as I conducted the interview, nonetheless I tracked her moves as best I could with good result.

**Teacher B:** This is something I, I, I actually wanted to say earlier and it was brought back with that question. So, I'm glad you raised that. Um [pause], I mean I think even though I feel my, *my* perception of just differences and diversity--in terms of all sorts of identities--has really opened up as I've had these experiences, um, I think the reverse can kind of be true, too. Um, especially in working with students who are still young, who are still learning. And thinking about myself at that point [referring to her students' current age and development] versus now [referring to herself currently being an adult]--you know--I did have more narrowly held beliefs just because of life experience. You know, not having--you know--high school yet, where I did learn so much. Not having my first teaching job, where I learned so much. So thinking about maybe how students, then, perceive *me, too*--based on my identity. So, even though--you know--I might not

be as mindful of it--students might still be. That's something that--you know--I, I kind of thought about.

**PI:** How students are taking up your i-- your identities. Even if you may not be...

**Teacher B:** Cognizant of it. Yeah.

**PI:** Right. Paying attention to it.

**Teacher B:** Or consci--well, consciously--you know--focusing on it.

**PI:** Um hmm.

**Teacher B:** *They* [her students] might still be. Um hmmm [affirmative head nod].

**PI:** Yeah, yeah. And what's important about that?

**Teacher B:** Ummm...[long pause] I'm trying to think of how to articulate it. [pause]. Yeah, well definitely just--you know--stereotypes. Cause we, we all do it. Again, when I was that age--you know--you hear that and you're like "Ok, well..." just out of ignorance, especially. I just attribute that to age. Like, "Oh, ok. Well...I hear that..."--you know--I take it at face value; kids are like a sponge; and they kind of perpetuate what they hear at home or hear in society around them. So, because of that--you know--kids might stereotype. Ummm, or [long pause]. Or even, jus--just as I, you know, I feel like I was, I was learning and it was kind of a gradual process. Kids may already be, be learning, but they may--you know--due to that learning and kind of breaking away from, from stereotypes. Or breaking away from the way that they were raised. They might not, not know quite how to [pause] how to take--you know--who I am as a person. They might be questioning that [affirmative head nod]. You know?

**PI:** It's interesting you say that because I'm thinking--and this is me trying to bounce it back to hear you--I'm wondering if, um [pause] there is some concern around [pause] what students are thinking about you?

**Teacher B:** I wouldn't say concern, um. Cause my, my thing. [Light hearted gesture of admission] Cause I am a sensitive person, I'm going to be honest. But my thing um, just in the line of work that we do. It is so personal to *us*. We do pour--you know--and people say "Oh, well you can't go over a hundred percent."--we pour 110%. I'm ok saying that.

**PI:** Right.

**Teacher B:** We pour 110% into what we do. So-you know--then you have a tendency to get a little defensive. But, I think for me then it's to *not* take something personally. And there might just be factors that are out of your control--you know--that, that, that play into how students perceive you.

**PI:** Um, hmm.

**Teacher B:** And it might be related to your identities. For the reasons that I just mentioned.

This exchange in the exit post-interview was a key moment of this study which allowed me to find that Teacher B saw her own identities as put at risk by students whom she sees as diverse, especially racially diverse. It is certainly possible for *any* student to make Teacher B feel that her own identities are being put at risk, but the evidence suggests that students she experiences as "diverse" students, differ from those she does not see as "diverse."

When it comes to "diverse" students, of course engaging the "whole child" was a good

thing to her. Yet, the problem with engaging across the identities of “diverse” students was that some parts of the “whole child” put herself at risk. One risky part of the diverse “whole child” for Teacher B was the race practicing part of the child. The race practicing part of the diverse “whole child” might see her racially White identity in ways that were uncomfortable, unfair, or even untrue (“stereotypes”). Ironically, the exact same thing could be said about the race practicing part of any racially White “whole teacher.” As we all know too well, however, injuries and injustices take on a whole new meaning when it is happening to us, rather than someone else.

After 57 minutes of exit interviewing, I finally began to track down Teacher B’s meaning of how her own identities were significant in her teaching. It came down to less than four minutes of her own language.

**PI:** One last question:

**Teacher B:** Sure.

**PI:** What is race? As you think about it. What is race?

**Teacher B:** I think that it's just--you know--the origin [pause] country or origin, the, the, the, conglomerate group of ethnicities--you know--that you, you originate from.

**PI:** How, how do you originate from it?

**Teacher B:** A lot of people attribute that to just skin color, which again is part of the problem, but I see it too as the cultural experiences--you know--that, that people have. Um, you know, it could be, as I mentioned, how you celebrate with your family. Or how you speak and language can kind of play into that too. I think

[language is] a little more ethnic rather than racial. Um, you know or even, you know, more basic how you live your life based on climate and geography, based off of where you originate from, things like that.

**PI:** Are you born into races, or is a race something that you pick up along the way as you live your life?

**Teacher B:** Yes, I think that--you know--and again this is something I personally think is, is a problem cause we slap that [racial] label on, um, but I think we're born into it--you know--that's ingrained into us at an early age and I think the differences that come with that are ingrained into us, um, and kinda, kinda, with those blinders I think of my own upbringing--you know--you're White, this is what it means--you know--and not necessarily, you know, right or wrong but just that, that tunnel vision kind of--and I've thought about that alot too, after we talked about that, kind of just the selfishness that comes with [gesture], [o]kay well this is, this is the way that it is. This status quo. [toward race as *consequential social practice*]

**PI:** Um, hmm. Um, hmm. And, and to be clear on my questioning, when I ask are you born into it, I'm asking [pause], like the way you're born with blue eyes. The way you're born with freckles. Are you born with race? Is what I mean.

**Teacher B:** Are you talking about, like the actual distinction, like Black, White, da, da, da, da...check the box? Or just the overarching concept?

**PI:** Whichever it, whichever it is [that] you have in mind.



**Teacher B:** I was thinking more like the check the box concept. Like, you are this [gesture]. Um, but in my experience it kinda was the things that come with that.[toward race as *consequential social practice*] You know. And I'll be honest, there is--you know--in this country right now an, a, a certain privilege. Um, and that's something that is shifting, which is good.<sup>13</sup> But there is a certain privilege and I think that my idea of, of race especially--my own Whiteness or other people's--you know--Blackness or Hispanicness or whatever you wanna say expanded after having more experiences. After--you know--being exposed to people of different races then that's kinda when my, my world view opened up and my concept of race opened up. Um, hmm...if that, if that helps. If that makes a little more sense.

**PI:** No, it does. No, I mean like I said, I just wanted to--you know--make sure I heard from you.

What I learned from this portion of her exit interview response is that Teacher B was once unaware of race. Having become aware of race through encountering racial difference, and also becoming aware of the privileges that are apportioned to racially White identity, her ideals (especially those connected with her religion) have required her to form a response to that which she has become “opened up” about. Part of this response is a rejection of racial unfairness, but another part is to downplay race altogether. She even makes references to a consequential social practice view of race which has brought into her awareness those things which have been

---

<sup>13</sup> In social media ([www.facebook.com/IamMarcusCroom](https://www.facebook.com/IamMarcusCroom)) and publications (Croom, in press) I discuss the “post-White turn” (#postWhite) which I see coming, if not already occurring, in human history.

“ingrained” into her as a White woman and the “things that come with” the fact of being categorized as one race, another, or as mixed race (“check the box”). While these references, however, do not characterize her view of race, it is important to highlight them for whatever they may be worth to her racial journey beyond scope of this study. In other words, she is attempting to have no part in race as she has now become aware of race, in part through dysconscious practices (see also evasion practices finding).

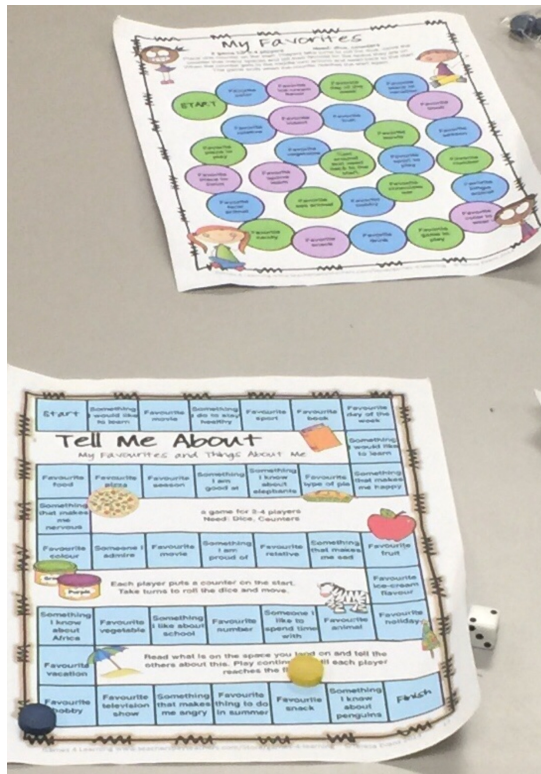
Her upbringing did not show her the horrors of race, that is, the terms on which many nonWhites were living out race in the world beyond her own upbringing. Her upbringing only allowed her to see sociopolitically whitewashed, Catholic, private school, homogenous racial experience. Her racially dysconscious ideals were thrown into deep conflict when her “concept of race opened up” and she was still embroiled in this deep conflict during my investigation of her conceptualization of race. In short, even by the end of this study, Teacher B was still having difficulty with explicitly engaging the racial level of teaching practice. She had no problem with discussing the instructional level of teaching practice. For example, she reasoned that “no matter who you are” students need to be exposed to universal themes, metacognition, higher order thinking skills, certain literacy skills, etc. Teacher B felt that she was doing best by her students when she focused on the instruction analytic level of teaching practice, rather than including matters from the race analytic level of teaching practice. But, as we have seen from an earlier part of this exit interview, to whatever extent Teacher B is focused on her students’ needs, she is also serving her own needs. She is engaging in self-preservation by avoiding parts of the diverse “whole child” that put herself at risk, namely the race practicing part of her diverse students. Teacher B talks as if her racially White identity is unsafe with her diverse students (*race as*

*risky/tricky*). Her language suggests that it was safer for her—and from her perspective, better for her students—if she stuck with the instructional practice level of teaching practice (*race as dispensable/inessential*). Nonetheless, those few times when she explicitly acknowledged the race analytic level of teaching practice, it was with language which conveyed that right should prevail over wrong (a racial literacies practice). This moral conviction I sensed about her left me feeling optimistic about her journey toward developing racial literacies at some point in her teaching career. I'm not at all confident, however, that her majority racially White, socioeconomically affluent school context will be the catalyst for such development, if it ever does occur. As was reported above, racial heterogeneity made race relevant to Teacher B, not racial homogeneity.

### *Lesson Two*

I reported events before and after Teacher B's lesson two because this helps to meaningfully frame what I observed during her instruction with the Black girl she was assigned to teach during the practicum. According to my observation instrument notes, Teacher B spent nearly the first 30 minutes of the lesson playing games that allowed her to gather information about and build rapport with her student. These games were titled, "My Favorites" and "Tell Me About." An image of these information gathering and rapport building games is provided below.

**Figure 6. Teacher B: Information and Rapport Building Games**



As the image shows, these games were board-style games involving shared rolling of dice and moving across spaces accordingly. Because the moves are random, the design of the game board defines the possibilities of what will or will not be discussed. I did not inquire about how Teacher B arrived at using these games, but it is clear that she selected them and brought hard copies with her for this lesson. On the surface, these games are age appropriate ways of getting to know a rising Third Grader's interests, experiences, and even their general knowledge about the world. Upon a closer inspection, however, these selected games also provided a window into Teacher B's racial thinking, via practice.

For example, after landing on "Favourite movie" (spelling of favorite suggests something about who created this game board) in the "Tell Me About: My Favourites and Things About

Me” game, Teacher B and her Black girl student discuss the film *Moana*. One of the things that the Black girl highlights about the film is that “Moana, she was like the leader.” This child also noted that “*Moana* is a copycater from *Mulan*.” In response, Teacher B appeals to the gender significance of these characters, but not the racial significance of these same characters and films.

**Teacher B:** [in response to “copycater” comment from Black girl] That’s ok. If you’re a leader, if you’re taking charge [apparently even if in a copycat film] that’s ok. So having more than one strong leader princess, that’s a good thing! Very good.”

Clearly, Teacher B is unapologetic about including gender identities in this get-to-know-you dialogue. But what about race? Teacher B is conceptualizing *race as dispensable/inessential*, even perhaps as *risky/tricky*, while she carries out the dysconscious practice of cherry-picking which student identities to engage in this situation. Other moments from these games further evidence this point.

Through two different turns that end up related during the “Tell Me About” board game, Teacher B evidences racially dysconscious practice. In one moment, Teacher B rolls for her turn and, after moving spaces, lands on “Something I know about elephants.”

**Teacher B:** [counting across six spaces aloud and lands] Oooo. Something I know about elephants? Ok, well I know that elephants can live either in Africa or in Asia. That’s usually where you find them. Unless, of course, they’re in the zoo. [Speaking to Black girl] What’s something you know about elephants?

**Black girl:** Elephants, um [pause]. Elephants have big ears.

**Teacher B:** [playful surprise inhale] They do have big ears! You're so right  
[Black girl's name]. And what do you think they use those big ears for?

**Black girl:** To hear.

**Teacher B:** [playful surprise inhale] To hear? Yeah. Yeah, I bet if you're such a big animal you would need bigger ears to hear everything that's going on, right? And they'd probably look silly with little ears wouldn't they? [playful laughter]  
Awesome. Alright, you are up.

In this harmless exchange, even if a bit awkward to read, Teacher B mentions Africa in association with elephants. In a later moment, the Black girl connects this exchange with a different board game tile statement.

**Teacher B:** [After teacher watches Black girl's turn at silently counting spaces from her dice roll, Black girl lands on "Something I know about Africa"]  
Something that you know about Africa. Oooo, so throwing in some, like some Social Studies knowledge here.

**Black girl:** [paused in thought] Elephants?

**Teacher B:** [playful surprise inhale] Very good! Oh, you remembered our fact about elephants. I love how you're tying in what you already know. Yeah, so you can find elephants in Africa. [shifting the board tile statement back to herself]  
Now, something that *I* know about Africa is that it is very, very, very hot there. There's a lot of deserts. So it's hot and dry. And the sun gets really, really hot there. Yeah [somewhat awkward trail off]. Very good. Ooo, that's a fun one. Like a little factoid [rolls dice for her own next turn]. Ok.

Aside from revealing that Teacher B knows almost nothing about the continent of Africa, this exchange evidences that Teacher B is conceptualizing *race as risky/tricky*, as *dispensable/inessential*, and *as is* (in this case as she herself has presented it) while she carried out the dysconscious practice of unmindfully rehashing shabby stereotypes of an entire continent. Since Teacher B does not mention people, this would not be an example of racial *placializing*, however. Observing this moment reminded me of early cartography of Africa (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/02/google-maps-gets-africa-wrong>). I have provided a macroanalytic example below, Willem Janszoon Blaeu's 17th century map of Africa. Note that there are animals and deserts depicted. Additionally, there is a poem excerpt which is also an example of the race macroanalytic level practice her description indexed. See this excerpt of *On Poetry: A Rhapsody* by Jonathan Swift immediately after the image of Blaeu's early, Western European map of Africa.



**Figure 7. 17th Century Map of Africa by Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571-1638)**



**Excerpt from 18th Century text *On Poetry: A Rhapsody* by Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)**

*So geographers, in Afric maps,  
With savage pictures fill their gaps,  
And o'er uninhabitable downs  
Place elephants for want of towns.*

As both this early Western European cartography and this literature suggests, Africa is easily the most racially imagined continent on planet Earth. There is no sincere way to mention Africa at this point in human history (in any mode) without any racial meaning whatsoever. The fact that Teacher B manages to act and react in ways that evidence both dysconscious practice and even



evasion practice—as I have defined these—in this instructional moment is a telling data point of this investigation. Across both of these different moments, which ended up becoming related, we see that Teacher B was only willing to engage this Black girl’s gender. This White woman was not at all willing to engage this Black girl’s racial identity.

As I reflected on these two moments, I realized that while this was clearly a race event about Africa, there was no evidence of a genre of race. I frankly don’t yet know how to make sense of the presence of a race event without even a genre of race that I can clearly identify. Future analyses of this dataset or additional data might yield a clear explanation of how to reconcile this current evidence.

Later during this same lesson, Teacher B introduced a paper passport that her and her student would use to sign in for each lesson and to keep with the “journey” theme Teacher B selected for their practicum experience. While discussing the places that the Black girl might want to go, specifically places that might require an actual passport, the continent of South America was mentioned by the Black girl. In response to the Black girl’s interest in traveling to South America the following exchange occurred:

**Teacher B:** Now *South America*, *that’s*, that’s a pretty exciting adventure. What would you want to do there? [to Black girl]

**Black girl:** Um, I would want to invite a lot of people over so we could have a party.

**Teacher B:** [playful surprise inhale] Oooo, like a party in South America [teacher appears to write a note about this comment as she continues her reply]. And they have, there’s like a lot of jungle areas down there, right? With all kinds of pretty

animals. Yeah. That would be fun. Yeah, like a jungle party [turns attention to paper passport that the Black girl has finished coloring]. Very neat. Oh! I love it. That looks great! You are ready for adventure. So then, we will--we'll have you start right here [pointing to place for signing in on inside fold of paper passport]. If you could just write your name and then again, today's date--it's June 20th--just so we know we adventured already today [pause]. Oh I love how you are using your neatest handwriting. Did you practice a lot at school?

**Black girl:** Yeah.

**Teacher B:** Yes, I bet. I bet they always tell you, "Do your best work, use your neatest handwriting" [pause]. Oooo, fancy! Yeah, you have a good signature there. Getting ready for Hollywood. For an autograph. When you become a famous singer and dancer [ambitions that the Black girl shared about herself during the lesson as the teacher and student were getting to know things about each other]. Perfect! Thank you, thank you [as teacher collects the signed passport, folds it, and puts it aside to transition].

Without inferring what is not warranted, this exchange reveals the same shabby stereotyping of the continent of South America as had also occurred with the continent of Africa during the board game. This pattern is critical because the chosen theme ("journey") and paper passport sign-in process implied international travel. Race, in some form, was being imaged and carried out in the guise of what places beyond North America are like. As above, the placializing genre does not apply because people were not mentioned, but these places beyond the U.S. and North America were being characterized in troubling ways during this lesson. Teacher B reported that

her own international travel was only to Canada. Yet, she was unmindfully setting up social facts about entire continents which have racial meaning for herself and her student as they “journey” during their literacy practicum experience, and perhaps beyond the summer practicum program. Teacher B is evidencing the dysconscious practice of reducing places outside the U.S. or North America to simple, exotic, uncivilized places—that is places which are untouched or less touched by human organized, modern social life. Perhaps the absence of reference to people is an alternate way of “equating place and racialized people” through erasure of, or lack of acknowledging the presence of, existing people. Reasoned this way, this observed race micropractice would be situated within a long history of race macropractice which had the effect of erasing or not acknowledging some human beings, something amply recorded by historians. Whatever the case, I don’t yet know how to name the race production which was in progress. Still, these two examples were important examples of dysconscious practice because this teacher was “uncritical, unmindful [of her] race actions and reactions.” Taken together, these two episodes of Teacher B’s dysconscious practice suggest that she was conceptualizing race either as *dispensable/inessential*, or *as is*, and perhaps this displays even a *hybrid of conceptualizations*. If this was a hybrid of race conceptualizations, it would explain why I could not decide about naming this observed form of race production (e.g. racial genre?) and then simply fit her conceptualization into one of the five that I found. It was not clear to me how Teacher B was conceptualizing race in these two continent-related episodes, but both episodes were clear examples of dysconscious practice (and even evasion practice) during the study.

#### 4.1.5 Finding 5: Teachers' Race Conceptualization in Racial Literacies Practice

##### *Teacher A: Conceptualization in Pre-Post SIT Task*

When I compared her pre-SIT task to her post-SIT task responses, there was no change in Teacher A's selection of race as one of the "most important" student identities she considered when creating literacy lessons for students. There was change for this teacher's selections to include age and gender; and to exclude economic status (this was unmarked either way initially). Figure 8 shows the pre- and post-SIT task.

**Figure 8. Teacher A Pre- and Post-SIT Task Responses**

**Interview A**

**Pre-Interview Task**

Outstanding teachers, like yourself, consider a number of things when they are helping their students. These factors include student identities. Some examples of student identities are listed on this sheet, but there may be other student identities beyond these to consider. When teachers are preparing for instruction, they may think about any number of student identities to help their students learn.

**Students' Multiple Identities**

nationality	ethnicity
race	citizenship status X
age	gender
sexuality	(dis)ability
economic status	academic designation(s)
language	neighborhood/community affiliation(s) X
Other identities:	
1. affinity groups	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

**Teacher A Post**

**Post-Interview Task**

Outstanding teachers, like yourself, consider a number of things when they are helping their students. These factors include student identities. Some examples of student identities are listed on this sheet, but there may be other student identities beyond these to consider. When teachers are preparing for instruction, they may think about any number of student identities to help their students learn.

**Students' Multiple Identities**

nationality	ethnicity
race	citizenship status X
age	gender
sexuality	(dis)ability
economic status	academic designation(s)
language	neighborhood/community affiliation(s) X
Other identities:	
1. Affinity Groups	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Given the reported unchanged significance of students' racial identity to this teachers' instructional planning, it was warranted to examine how race factored into this teacher's instructional preparation, instructional practice, and her interviews, as I have in the findings sections above and now here.

As early as lesson four, Teacher A evidenced openness to race as sensible. After asking about her own identities in teaching, a query pulled from my question bank, I followed up by asking about her reaction to my new question and what value she felt my new question might have for literacy instruction. Her response suggested that the value of my question might have included racial implications for her. As she explained,

“...everybody has their own experiences, past experiences, especially with literacy. And if they’re not necessarily, um, identified or discussed or, you know, unpacked like you had mentioned, those kind of experiences can play into *your* teaching and, um, *your* lesson planning, your text choices, your interactions with students, um, at almost a undercover level, I feel. And that if it’s not something that’s brought out into the open and unpacked more, maybe [doing so] would make us more aware of, um, some of the decisions we make and why and, um, maybe to make some different decisions that we wouldn’t normally make in planning and preparation.”

As her response reveals, Teacher A seemed to begin seeing *race as sensible*, rather than only as *common sense*, *risky/tricky*, *dispensable/inessential*, or *as is*. If this is as it appears, this means that she was beginning to see race as a worthwhile, approachable, and reasonable aspect of her own teaching practice.

In the case of Teacher A, by the end of the study it was clearly evident that she had shifted in some of her conceptualization of race, namely from *race as risky/tricky*, *dispensable/inessential*, and *as is* to *race as sensible*. She continued to conceptualize race as common sense, however. While these are not to be seen as full and permanent shifts,

the evidence suggests that Teacher A's race conceptualization had begin to include race as sensible. During the post-study exit interview, Teacher A reported that she was "more comfortable" with the race analytic layer of teaching.

**PI:** And, what else comes to mind as you complete this sheet?

**Teacher A:** You know, I'm not...I can't remember exactly what I had written or circled or whatever before, but I think--you know--after our experience together I would be more inclined to consider race and ethnicity and nationality when planning. And, and I think--you know--a lot of...It's kind of the conversation today. Like, some people feel that it's taboo to talk about these sort of things or that it's a bad thing to consider. But, you know...those things make up who we are and, and our background. And our, um, understanding of the way the world works and, and...I think it's important to consider when, when planning to connect on the best level you can with your students.

**PI:** And you say, "We talked today"...you mean you and I or another setting?

**Teacher A:** No--you know--just things that we've talked about have made me reflect a little bit more on, um--you know--incorporating or, or considering my students' self-identities. Um, whether that be the language they speak, or um--you know--the cultural practices they participate in outside of school or their race or their nationality...that is an important part of who they are, and, and...it might not always be relevant in what I'm planning or preparing, but it certainly should be a thought.

This language evidences that Teacher A was no longer only seeing race as a potential pitfall to be avoided as a professional educator. While race had continued to be an important identity of her students, the significance of students' racial identity for literacy lesson planning had begun to shift for Teacher A. She had made room for race and her own explicit consideration of race within her instructional practice. By this point in our study, Teacher A was beginning to develop some racial literacies that made it more comfortable for her to be explicit about both the instruction and race analytic level of teaching practice, rather than only being explicit about the instruction layer of her practice. She was not done developing racial literacies, she had begun to develop some racial literacies.

When I asked her about her own identities and teaching, she reported that age, gender, and race were important to her when teaching. When she spoke specifically about her racial identity and teaching, she explained:

**Teacher A:** I, I know I talked about this a little bit in the, in the pre-, um, interview. And it's...I'm not sure if it's my race specifically but the difference in race of me verse many of my students. Again, I wanna seem authentic and genuine. I don't wanna seem like I'm one of their friends on the streets because that's not what I am. I am an authority figure, I am a teacher and, um, so it's like a fine line you're walking. You know?

Teacher A points to racial difference as the significant issue, not her own racially White identity. From her standpoint, racially White identity was not significant in her teaching, rather the racial differences between herself and her students was significant. This suggests that her earlier conflation of race with culture continued until the end of the study, despite some other shifts in

her conceptualization of race. The racial difference between herself and her students was a 'great divide' of sorts that she had tried to bridge as best she could as a racially White, female teacher, still she could never close the gap of racial difference that existed between her students and her.

When asked about what she was taking away from this study, she admitted that she had been defensive about sharing how she had begun to change her understanding of race in teaching.

**Teacher A:** Um, you know I think that I have become a little bit--you know earlier when you asked me if I've become a little bit more comfortable with, um, incorporating race and racial discussions and text in my teaching? I originally said no, but I think that was kind of like a defense mechanism, almost.

**PI:** Oh! Interesting...

**PI:** Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait...let's not run past that. Say more about that.

**Teacher A:** I don't know, I just think that people are quick to say, "Oh, no I don't, I didn't change, I didn't..." Nobody wants to admit that they [pause] weren't doing everything they can before. You know? Like...

**PI:** Oh, ok...like almost a criticism of some sort?

**Teacher A:** Yeah, yeah. A little bit. And I didn't, I didn't feel judged by any means, no. But, but...

**PI:** [cross talk with Teacher A]

**Teacher A:** I guess, going down that, that road. And I think after reflecting on--you know--our conversations and the work we've done together. I do think I am a little bit more comfortable, um, um--you know--choosing text materials or having



discussions or--you know--bringing in ethnicity and race and culture more into my planning and preparation as...than I would've been before. And a lot of our um--you know--undergraduate studies of course hit on that. But you really don't put it into practice and, and that's, that's a problem with teacher preparation programs. And I'm not sure how to fix it, um, but it's definitely something that I have been more reflective on.

This admission of defensiveness about sharing her racial shifts quickly moved to an indictment of teacher preparation programs. I will say more about this point in my discussion of teacher preparation programs.

Across the language of these interviews, Teacher A evidenced changing complexity wherein she began to shift from a complex, less productive understanding of race to a complex, more productive understanding of race in her teaching practice. Teacher A was beginning to conceptualize *race as sensible*—it made sense to account for racial identity or other race related matters in her instructional practices because she was beginning to see race as helpful, approachable, and reasonable as a teacher.

#### *Across the Cases of Teacher A and Teacher B in Entry-Exit Interviews*

Across these interviews, there are at least 5 themes that I have noted across both participants: (1) Teachers sensed that their racially White identity put them at a disadvantage when relating to their nonWhite students, (2) racial difference between themselves and their students was a taxing experience, (3) racial difference was an outward mark of cultural difference, (4) each teacher evidenced inconsistencies between their written and spoken language

with regard to the race practice layer of teaching practice, and (5) citizenship status was not a student identity consideration for either teacher.

<b>Race as Common Sense</b>	<b>Race as Risky/Tricky</b>	<b>Race as Dispensable/ Inessential</b>	<b>Race as “Is”</b>	<b>Race as Sensible</b>
Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A Teacher B	Teacher A

<b>Race Event</b>		
Teacher A & Teacher B		
<b>Labeling</b> Teacher A Teacher B	<b>Social Classing</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<b>Naming</b>	<b>Vindicating</b>	<b>Placializing</b>
<b>Naturalizing</b> Teacher B	<b>Common Sensing</b>	<b>Sciencing</b>

#### **4.1.6 Other Language and Practice Findings**

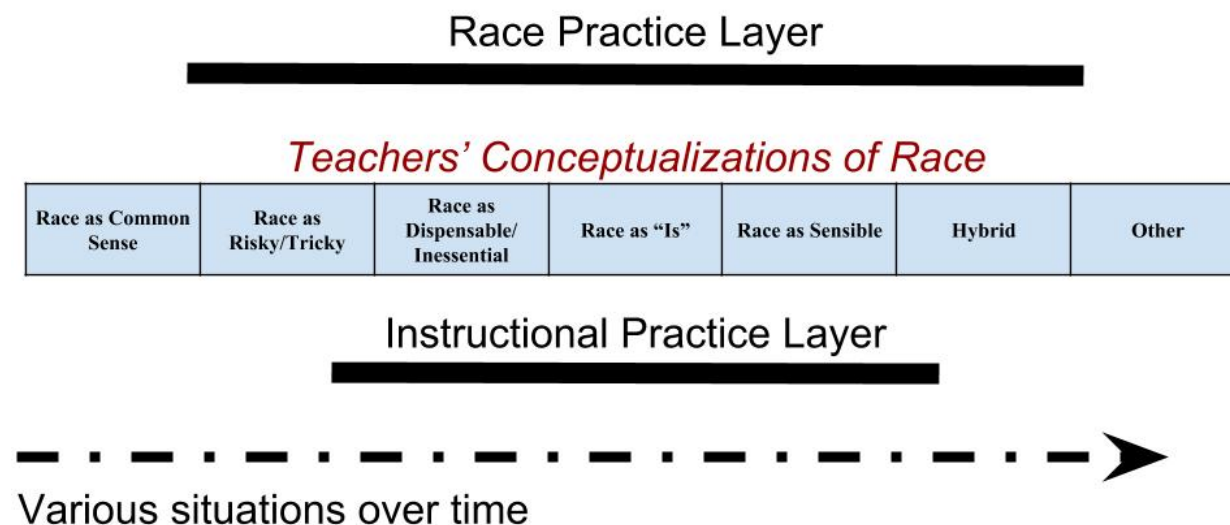
There were other findings which related to teachers’ conceptualizations of race, but warrant a separate reporting section.

#### **Toward a Race Mediated Teaching Model (RMTM)**

Across these surveys, interviews, and lessons, I found that race practice was mediated by one’s conceptualization of race. I raised race openly as the investigator because my

conceptualization of race did not constrain me from acting and reacting to the race analytic layer of the situation openly. Teacher A and B, however, conceptualized race in ways that did constrain them from openly acting and reacting to the race analytic layer of the situation at times. In some circumstances, it was only when I lead these teachers toward engaging the race analytic layer that they began to evidence how they were acting and reacting to race. This suggests that both Teacher A and Teacher B may have had other currently unknown actions and reactions to racialization which I could not document with the design of this investigation. Figure 9 illustrates an attempt toward a Race Mediated Teaching Model (RMTM), which includes teachers' conceptualizations of race among the two analytic levels of situated teaching practice. My current model is a depiction of the data as both situated racialization and race conceptualization as mediating factors of teaching practice. Future models will be refined.

**Figure 9. Illustration Toward a Race Mediated Teaching Model (RMTM)**



## Assessment Race Practice

As I observed the assessment portion of Teacher A's lesson four, I noted that the comprehension assessment instrument implied some race practice. According to my observation notes,

“During the oral comprehension assessment, the investigator noted that the names of the comprehension assessment characters and the situations of the short narratives lack explicit racial language, but socioeconomic, gender, and age language is explicit. Even when socioeconomic language is only implied, race is still even more unarticulated. This is also true of *Big Nate* (Peirce, 2010), a text that Black boy selected from the available choices in the teacher's library. *Big Nate* (Peirce, 2010) is used as a student read aloud to conclude this lesson (as in other lessons); just before the student exit survey.”

Below is a transcription of the assessment text read by Teacher A to collect comprehension data about her student. After reading this small narrative aloud to her student, Teacher A asked her student to respond orally to the comprehension assessment questions:

“Sherry sat quietly staring at the tiny black and green slip of paper in her hand. She remembered how moved she had been when Maryann first gave it to her. Sherry knew her best friend was extremely poor and couldn't afford even a small gift for Sherry's 12th birthday. She was surprised when Maryann pulled her aside and handed her a pretty wrapped box with a tiny bow. Inside there was a ticket. Sherry was touched by her friend's gesture. But she never imagined that the slip of paper would be randomly drawn as the winner in her classroom raffle.”

**Teacher A:** Ok, I'm gonna ask you some questions now that have to do with that text.

After exploring this unexpected characteristic of the comprehension assessment, I added the following to my observation instrument notes and new tables as described:

“In light of the previous note, the investigator added a column to the genres of race chart: “Text Use Tally.” The investigator returned to the comprehension assessment portion of the lesson to count genres evident in the assessment the teacher used. After beginning this analysis, another kind of chart was created to better capture evidence from the assessment text. The use of mainstream names, an attempt to offer de-racialized characters, brought my attention to naming as another racializing convention. People speak of “Black names” and “White names,” for example, and the evidence suggests that the authors of the comprehension assessment were avoiding race by selecting racially unmarked names. The assessment creators preferred to acknowledge gender, socioeconomic status, and age, but not race. The use of mainstream names confirms the avoidance of race, while positioning what some might call “White names” as neutral or de-raced, rather than racially White normative names. For example, while the assessment creators clearly intend for “Elizabeth” and “Josh” to be a racially and culturally neutral name, Aisha and Trayvon would be marked as a racially and culturally loaded, racially and culturally specific, or even as ethnic names in such an assessment. The racialization of these assessment prompts is tacit yet evidenced by what is explicit (gender, socioeconomic status, age,

mainstream names) and what is unarticulated, but still not fully absent (racially White normative, superordinate racialization).

An example of the new table I created is shown below.

**Table 15. Assessment Race Practice Evidence**

<b>“Strange Gift”</b>	<b>Time(s):</b>	<b>Teacher Use Tally</b>	<b>Student Use Tally</b>	<b>Text Use Tally</b>
Gender	54:49			1 (she, her)
Age	55:02			1
Socioeconomic Status	54:58			1 (“extremely poor”)
Sexual Orientation				
Mainstream Names	54:43; 54:53			1 1 (“Sherry,” “Maryann”)
Race Production				Tacit

Finding evidence of race practice in the assessments Teacher A used during lesson four came as a surprise. These conventional assessments were carried out after this teacher and student completed a project to create slime by following written directions. I did not find evidence of race practice during this lesson’s slime project. The assessments brought out race practice. I include this assessment race practice in this report because assessment occurred within the micro-level I observed, but this micro-level indexed other levels of race practice. For example, broader institutional norms explain the inclusion and exclusion of social identifications in the assessment (social class, age, gender, race). These norms were evident in the text of the assessments I analyzed in lesson four, especially naming fictional characters. Perhaps these institutional race-related norms reinforced or counteracted this teacher’s conceptualizations of race as she encountered these norms through the assessments. This would also be worth

considering from the perspective of the student's experience with the assessment. For example, what difference might it make for a raced as Black child to read "Black names" (Fryer & Levitt, 2004) in an assessment?

## **4.2 Summary**

Why am I arguing that this evidence of teaching practice must be analyzed at two levels, instructionally and racially? Human teaching obviously involves instruction and learning. Human culture, however, has included racialization since the 1600s. Further, the teachers, especially Teacher A, evidenced that they were aware of more than one "level" in teaching. While there are certainly other analytic lenses which should be brought to teaching practice, our human culture has made a race analytic lens indispensable and essential. A race analytic lens on teaching is necessary, then, even if it is not a panacea for teaching Black children or improving the learning outcomes of Black children.

Before this study began, my participants were acting and reacting to the racially situated aspects of their professional work as teachers, as evidenced in their survey responses and interviews. During the study, these two participants continued to act and react to the immediate and broader racialized situation in which we found ourselves. After the study concluded, these two teachers continued to live and labor in their own racially situated worlds, departing with the sense that they had made their own unique shifts toward developing racial literacies because of their experience with the investigation.

An example that shows that these teachers continued to live and labor in their own racially situated worlds occurred during a post-analysis member check. After I prepared an early draft of these written findings, I contacted both teachers to give them early access to my report

and to include their understanding of my findings, thereby assessing the accuracy of my findings. When Teacher B and I met for this member check interview, she read each section of the findings which was pertinent to her study participation and gave insight and reliability feedback to me. Additionally, we conversed about how important I felt her story is for the field of education, particularly literacy education. As we talked, she shared a great concern that she has as a White person, which was evidenced in the data collected. Recall that I found that racial difference was a significant experience for Teacher B. During our member check interview, she revealed that her experience with racial difference was not limited to her professional work as a teacher. She shared that racial difference was also important when she was with her nonWhite friends and other nonWhites in general. As she explained it, in racial difference situations with nonWhites, she often wondered and worried about how her Whiteness was being perceived by nonWhites. She was greatly concerned, especially since the 2016 U.S. presidential elections, that she was being thought of by nonWhites as ‘one of those’ closet racist Whites which have become more visible nationally through various displays of White superordinate behavior, including voting for a candidate who did not repudiate ties to White supremacist organizations or ties to public demonstrations by White supremacists. She felt as if her Whiteness was quietly positioning her with nonWhites through unarticulated questions like: Was she one of those White women who voted for Trump? Was she a friendly White racist? Was she the #alllivesmatter type of White folks? I was struck by her honesty and sincere uneasiness about how her Whiteness might be taken up by nonWhites, even her own friends. As I listened to her experiencing her inescapable situation, my mind flashed back to W.E.B. Du Bois’ now old idea of double-consciousness. I shared that my own situation as a Black man had given me personal experience



with being aware of both my own self and some other projected self—a fantasy projected onto me by one White person or White folks in general. In her moment of vulnerability, I connected my Black experience with the White experience she was describing. Upon hearing my connection, she agreed that double-consciousness was a good way of putting what she was so racially anxious about. In her words, she didn't want to be misunderstood as a White person. "That's not who I am." She even went on to share that she only voted for Clinton in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections because she couldn't vote for Sanders (I had no problem sharing with her that I too voted for Clinton for the same reason).

I offer this example to make it clearer that the teachers in my study did not stop acting and reacting to the racialized situation in which we all find ourselves in the U.S., and more specifically in the Midwestern portion of the U.S. Even if undocumented and beyond the design of this investigation, these teachers continue to act and react, both personally and professionally, to the racialized situation that is always already in progress.

Without some systematic way of accounting for those practices which occurred during this investigation because of race—because they were actions and reactions to our racialized situation—we fail to accurately understand the teaching practice about which I have collected data. Teaching practice is not just about instruction, it is also about race—as practiced, conceptualized, and even analyzed.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify how teacher conceptualization of race was evident in literacy instruction. I learned that teachers' race conceptualizations were evidenced through various practices, which were actions and reactions to ongoing, situated racialization. In line with the literature review, indeed race was avoided during literacy instruction. Yet, both teachers evidenced at least small shifts toward conceptualizing *race as consequential social practice* and *race as sensible*. Still, some of these teachers' instructional practices fit the description of orchestrating literacy difficulties for Black children, especially if the curricular aim and effect is to develop Black children's multiple literacies.

### 5.1 Implications for Instruction

Some might ask: "Is it your argument that race is essential at all points throughout instruction? Can the same be said of gender identities, linguistic identities, personal identities?" I argue that race is always already in progress in teaching. This means that on some analytic level—macro to micro—race matters. It may or may not be salient at every moment of teaching. At this point, however, we haven't given enough attention to the race layer to simply assume that race is not salient. Therefore, the findings of this study have important implications for teaching and teacher preparation.

With regard to teacher preparation programs, recall when Teacher A commented about her experience in the teacher preparation programs she had completed. She raised an important point about her program's responsibility. Arguably, when she stated that she was not prepared enough for engaging race as a teacher this move was just another way of defending herself. While on one hand she recognized that there was an un(der)developed aspect of her teaching—

leading at the race layer of teaching; on the other hand she reasoned that she was not already doing more because of her teacher preparation, not *just* her own doing. While I agree that teacher preparation programs are culpable when teachers lack the development of racial literacies, this does not absolve individual teachers from culpability when they are not actively developing the racial literacies needed for their teaching practice. I urge teacher preparation programs and individual teachers to include and prioritize the development of racial literacies as a professional practice of teachers.

### *Philosophy in Literacy Education and Race Practice*

Throughout this investigation, I approached literacy education and race practice with the vindicationist philosophy of Black children (Hoover, 1990). This philosophical choice made me sensitive to the deficiency philosophy, manifested for example as deficit racial storylines in text and talk. Explicit attention to philosophy also helped me to note the philosophical issues to which one teacher returned during this study. Upon closer examination of this teacher's stated views, it became clearer that she had not questioned her thinking about "good people," citizenship, or values. All of this speaks to the importance of philosophy in the racialized situation of schooling. Although the studies reviewed for this research did not give attention to philosophy, this study suggests that philosophy has an important role in research and in day-to-day teaching practice. This is especially true when it comes to race. I suspect that if most researchers or teachers were asked to name their philosophy toward Black children, they would not be able to provide satisfactory responses. Given the ongoing racial situation in which we all find ourselves, philosophical issues should not be left aside or left to chance. The life outcomes of children, which have been linked to literacy education and the social practice of race, leave no

room to doubt that children's very lives can be helped or harmed by both. To the extent that philosophy plays a role in literacy education and race practice, clearly philosophy matters. School educators—support staff, teachers, and administrators—should give attention to their own tacit philosophy toward Black children (and human beings) and become aware of both the vindicationist philosophy and the deficiency philosophy which might inform their practice (Hoover, 1990).

Beyond considering one's philosophy toward Black children, it is also important to take stock of one's racial orientation. As I have argued in this study, the White superordinate orientation is far more widespread than the post-White orientation (Croom, 2016b), an orientation which is informed by vindicationist philosophy. If indeed we are witnessing the birthpangs of the post-White turn, this suggests the need to reorient ourselves away from the White superordinate assumption and toward the post-White orientation as we continue to navigate our always, already racialized lives. This reorientation includes developing racial literacies among children and adults so that individuals, groups, and institutions might practice race for justice rather than injustice. If the much heralded postracial day ever arrives, it will be after we have reoriented ourselves away from the White superordinate assumption from the micro- to the macro-levels of human culture. In other words, a postracial turn *may* be possible only after the urgently needed post-White one.

### *Racial Literacies Development*

With regard to developing racial literacies among children, this study showed that there were rich opportunities to do so during one teacher's lessons and even some noteworthy opportunities in the other. In both cases, however, these teachers had not yet themselves

developed the racial literacies needed to support such development with their Black students. There were some promising moments along the way, but overall neither teacher was prepared to help their students develop racial literacies. This raises the point that students are not the primary factor in the development of racial literacies, rather, it is the teacher. If a teacher has already developed the racial literacies needed to, for example, question the deficit racial storyline of an information text, or to support the interests of a Black girl through books that feature other Black girls or Black women, this would have made it possible to orchestrate instruction in ways that differed from the orchestrations of the teachers in my study. It is likely that a teacher who has adequately developed racial literacies might also have different conceptualizations of race as well. This suggests that developing racial literacies might have a multiplier effect for both teachers and students. Future research should examine teacher discourse and practice in classrooms, schools, and other settings that involve Black children in order to document race practice and race conceptualization, and to also support the development of racial literacies among these adults and the children with whom they work.

As the evidence of this study suggests, it is unreasonable to lead children toward developing print literacies and neglect to support them in developing racial literacies. As shown in the case of Teacher A, Black children's multiple literacies, specifically print and racial, could be developed within even a single lesson, not to mention what is possible across a well-planned series of lessons during an entire traditional academic year. Unfortunately, there were missed opportunities in both cases due to each teachers' observed practices (e.g. text and evasion practices) and their own conceptualizations of race (e.g. *race as risky/tricky*, *dispensable/inessential*, *as is*). Future research should intervene in teachers' practices and

conceptualizations when investigating the teaching and learning of Black children. Ultimately, school educators have a responsibility to support students at both the instruction practice level and race practice level of schooling and society. When school educators meet this responsibility it helps Black children—and all children—to be academically and racially prepared for life, labor, leisure. How could school educators justify omitting teaching and learning which factors in the race analytic level of school education?

An urgent warning is necessary here: not all instructional changes are racially substantive changes. As we saw in lesson seven and eight of Teacher A's instruction, she selected texts which had the affordances to help students develop racial literacies, and yet she engaged the selected texts in ways that did little to go beyond what she might have done with texts that were void of such affordances. This means that structural changes are only a beginning when it comes to transforming teaching practice in ways that factor in the race layer. Once conditions are set for the development of racial literacies, these new possibilities must be capitalized upon. Both structural and substantive changes should be carried out in order to transform teaching practice in classrooms and schools.

### *Languageing and Practicing Race in Teaching*

Bloome & Beauchemin (2016) argue for a shift in focus from language to languageing in teaching. In an LRA video interview, they discussed the need for a case-based approach to helping teachers learn how languageing is occurring in the classroom. Along these lines, a case-based approach should be used to help teachers learn how to constructively respond to the race practice analytic layer of teaching. A key question of such case-based learning is: How is race practice carried out through languageing in the classroom? Because race practice is multimodal,

talk and text are but an entry point to various other forms of race practice. Accordingly, another key question that teachers should examine is: How is race practice occurring multimodally throughout the classroom? Teachers should also identify how they are conceptualizing race and how they are acting and reacting to the race layer of teaching. Along these lines, a number of important questions should be embedded in teacher preparation and teacher professional development: How is the teacher's own racial identity influencing the instructional situation? What racial storylines are being implicitly or explicitly projected onto students, racial groups, communities, institutions, and texts by the teacher? Are teachers producing deficiency views or parity views of racially nonWhite and racially White persons? Is there evasion, dysconscious, or racial literacies practice occurring? Under what circumstances, if so? Are teachers making use of available text affordances that could be used to develop students' racial literacies or to promote racial justice? Are teachers who consider themselves student centered or progressive educators really student centered? That is, are these teachers cherry picking which student identities, social experiences, or cultural practices to honor, nurture, protect, and sustain (Kamberelis, 2001; Paris, 2012)? John Dewey had an interesting intellectual history related to the race layer of teaching, so it would not be surprising if progressive educators had challenges with the race layer of teaching as well (Fallace, 2011). These questions begin to point out possibilities for using these research findings to support teaching and learning.

## **5.2 Implications for Research**

Going into this investigation, I had no idea how race or race conceptualization might become evident. Some of my design choices stemmed from worry that I might end up with no evidence to report if I did not move in close enough to notice significant processes, occurrences,

or meanings involved with race. As I come out of this investigation, I find it difficult to keep track of all the ways that race mattered in this investigation. One major realization that I now have is that my own identities were a significant factor of this investigation, in that people were acting and reacting to me as a Black, male, academic in ways which I was not always aware. I began to get clued in on the influence of my own identities as I invited others to openly discuss my identities, especially my racial identity. Before the study, I gave some thought to who might interview the participants (a White person or me?), but even that consideration was not deep enough in comparison to what I experienced during the study. Make no mistake, my experience was not generally negative, off putting, or awkward at all. What I mean is that I now see how I really had not taken stock of the uniqueness of my presence in a university literacy practicum, a research study, and even in the company of the children, parents, and university faculty I encountered at times. To be sure, the nature of my study raised some guards, but my own identities seemed to have their own influence beyond the nature of my investigation. It is not important to recount each story that comes to my mind (I'm wary of providing sources of distortion in print). The important point is that the consequences of race practice include the need to deeply consider how the researcher's own identities are both situated by and (re)situating those persons who are encountered during the investigation. I simply could not have understood this point without the experience of conducting this investigation in the particular situation in which I carried it out.

In retrospect, I am happy that I made no attempt to be 'outside' the data collection or data analysis. This choice created the opportunity to analyze my own actions and reactions to the race layer of the situation I was sharing with these White teachers and Black students. Because I did



not leave myself out of the record, I can not only reflect on my experience but also code my own practice and conceptualization as the investigator. I can see how I might have shaped race events and even used genres of race during the investigation. All of this raises the need for investigators to take stock of their own actions and reactions to the race layer as investigators—before, during, and after carrying out studies. My focus did not involve evaluating teaching, yet I questioned whether Teacher A’s instructional choices were a form of reacting to the race layer of the situation. Whether some might agree or disagree with my questioning is not as important as having the researcher included in the data and the analysis. Including the researcher as a participant in the social interactions under investigation helps to construct a fuller picture.

In order for research to contribute to practice, researchers must examine the race practice occurring in their own data collection designs and data analyses. Researchers should consider a number of questions: How are researchers languaging or not languaging race practice in their research? How does the inclusion or exclusion of an analysis of race practice relate to the positionalities and identities of the researcher(s)? Similar to instruction, archival research and current research should be (re)examined with at least race critical discourse analysis, or ideally, race critical practice analysis to surface the significance of racialization at the race practice analytic layer of research. This (re)examination may take several pathways: race and literacy research (Willis, 2015), multiple identities of teachers and students (Gloria Ladson-Billings, 2002, 2005; A. E. Lewis, 2011; A. E. Lewis & Diamond, 2015; Murrell, Jr., 2009; Nakamura, 2014; Nasir, 2012; Nasir et al., 2012; O’Connor et al., 2009; Van den Bergh et al., 2010; Wortham, 2005), race and languaging, race conceptualization among college students (Johnston,

2014)—especially future teachers, or through engagements with racial ambivalence theory (Markus, 2008).

### **5.3 Implications for Policy**

Lalik & Hinchman (2001) and many, many others have urged the federal, state, and local levels of schooling in the U.S. to question and rethink “what might constitute school literacy (Gallego & Hollingsworth, 2000)” (p. 555). This study made clear that there were missed opportunities with regard to developing racial literacies among students. These missed opportunities, however, are not simply the idiosyncratic failures of these two experienced teachers. This is much bigger than “Teacher A” and “Teacher B.” These two teachers were kind and courageous enough to allow me to examine their practices during a very challenging, high stakes, and no doubt vulnerable-feeling time. We all owe them a debt of appreciation, me foremost. These teachers were not professionals working in a vat. These teachers’ instructional focus and practice was situated by curriculum, standards, assessment, credentialing, and legal policies from the micro-level to the macro-level of U.S. schooling. Currently, there is little interest in developing the multiple literacies of Black children or adults, especially racial literacies. Without the necessary broad policy support and coordination which would create the conditions for children (who are future adults) to develop racial literacies along with other literacies through schooling, such outcomes will be sporadic at best. In light of our current political circumstances, especially at the federal level, I urge each level of policy makers to revise their view of literacy and advance from “literacy” to “literacies,” embracing the perspective that schooling in the U.S. should develop all children’s multiple literacies, including racial literacies. To emphasize this point by analogy, it is as irresponsible to avoid race education

as it is to avoid sex education. Children are already faced with navigating race in their lives, so we are being naïve and irresponsible to think that we can be silent about race or avoid the work of helping children develop racial literacies as they move toward adulthood themselves. Do we prefer to take the risk of allowing children to figure things out, trial and error, on their own or do we prefer to provide sound, healthy, age-appropriate guidance?

#### **5.4 Limitations**

In this study, I did not interview students, parents, practicum professors, practicum peers, or the community activists which coordinated with the university practicum site. Also, I did not use focus group interviewing with the two teachers. My design did not include longitudinal study with the teacher participants in order to investigate changes beyond the university practicum experience as these teachers began new careers as reading specialists. Importantly, the university practicum was scheduled as a condensed version of a regular semester, which means that the same number of teaching sessions required by accreditation occurred within a shorter time frame. The teachers (and I) were running hard and fast during the summer university practicum. As the sole investigator, I did not have a team of people to help me with operating cameras, audio recording, and observation of concurrent instructional sessions during the back-to-back instructional days. Having a research team would have given me more time to notice practice in the field during instruction, before reviewing recordings of lessons. This is an important consideration because some interviews might have unfolded differently, given more time to notice practice in the field.

The inter-rater reliability report showed me that some constructs need to be re-named to reduce the possibility of confusing terms and what they represent. For example, conceptualizing

race as common sense is different from using the common sensing racial genre. On the face of it, however, it is easy to confuse one term with the other. Both are representing something that has to do with the common sense view of race, but I need to rename one or both terms to improve clarity of meaning for each term.

Finally, my dissertation defense discussion (yes, it was a real discussion) surfaced that my illustration is indeed a model of the data collected, but it is not the best way to illustrate my argument that the instruction layer and the race layer are interlaced. Thus, with Miles and Huberman (1994) in mind, I have more work to do in order to display what I now know from this investigation. Future illustrations will be revised to reflect the wise feedback from my committee, especially Amanda Lewis. I thank each committee member once more for their guidance.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

I hope that this study points toward practice, research, and policy which will diminish the literacy difficulties faced by Black children as they strive to develop multiple literacies in the 21st Century. I also hope that we will usher all children into the post-White world, wherein anti-Black, White superordinate thought, practice, and consequences will no longer constrain all that each child always already is. Teaching and learning is a tool of both human survival and human suffering—thus we must decide whether we will use instruction to help or harm Black children and their peers.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Following are terms and definitions for the key constructs used in this investigation and data analysis.

#### Practice of Race Theory (PRT)

The practice-based, systematic, counter common sense explanation of race; defines race as consequential social practice; in other words, race is thinking and doing—synchronically and diachronically—as if we or others have race, for good or ill; includes mutually constitutive micro, meso-, and macroanalytic race practice across modes of meaning (see Croom, 2016; Croom, in press).

#### Genres of Race

Conventionalized ways of sharing racial meaning; racially situates meanings at the word level and beyond; includes race talk (Pollock, 2004) as a racial labeling genre.

*Nine Genres of Race Defined with Brief Examples:*

**Racial Labeling-** common racial classification terms or equivalent terms (e.g. Black, White, Latino/Hispanic, Filipino, Asian, Indian, minority, Brown, Yellow, urban music, etc.)

**Racial Ranking-** implicit or explicit racial hierarchy (e.g. racial classification ranked higher or lower than other racial classification)

**Racial Sciencing-** bid for credibility with research or study (e.g. any form of “studies show” or “research says” to make a racial claim)

**Racial Common Sensing-** bid for credibility with common sense (e.g. any form of “common sense tell us” or “we all know” to make a racial claim)

**Racial Naturalizing-** racial “markers” index human characteristics, capacities, or culture (e.g. label, hair, skin, bone, language, name, dress, etc.)

**Racial Placializing-** equating place and racialized people (e.g. any form of Southside, Westside, Northside, Eastside, inner city, suburbs, urban communities, etc.)

**Racial Naming-** implying racial classification with proper nouns (e.g. Becky, Tyrone, Sambo, Sally, etc.)

**Racial Social Classing-** equating social class and racial classification (e.g. any racial form of middle class, poor, affluent, high needs, low socioeconomic, etc.)

**Racial Vindicating-** questioning racial common sense, countering White racial superiority, regarding human plentitude (e.g. any form of calling out, questioning, countering, or rejecting the racially White category as above the racially nonWhite category or protecting and supporting racialized humanity against distortion and harm)

### **Race Events**

Instances when race production is significant to participants' situated interactions and interpretations; race event cues may occur in various modes; some race production may not result in evident race events.

### **Race Production**

Human acts of situated racialization, including use of any psychological or material tool. All race production may not be evident.

### **Race Critical Practice Analysis**

The post-White oriented (Croom, 2016b), systematic examination of any mode of racialization, including micro-, meso-, or macro analytic levels, to determine meaning, processes, or significance. Any appropriate method of data collection and interpretation should be used to critically identify or intervene in race practice; race critical discourse analysis is limited to D/discourses, whereas race critical practice analysis considers any mode, including discourse.

### **Conceptualizations of Race**

**Race as Common Sense-** viewing race as self-evident, biological, or as an ordinary human feature.

**Race as Risky/Tricky-** viewing race as threatening, stressful, worrying, controversial, or problematic.

**Race as Dispensable/Inessential-**viewing race as irrelevant, insignificant, pointless, or not worthwhile.

**Race as "Is"-** viewing race as not needing to be critically engaged or questioned; viewing race as something that should be left as it appears, as it is presented, as is.

**Race as Sensible-** viewing race as helpful, approachable, reasonable, clarifying, or as a contribution.

### **Observed Teacher Practice**

**Language Practice-** teachers' written or unwritten language

**Text Practice-** teachers' use of or engagement with texts

**Evasion Practice-** teachers' race avoidances

**Dysconscious Practice-** teachers' uncritical, unmindful race actions and reactions

**Racial Literacies Practice-** teachers' actions and reactions which index racial literacies

## Racial Literacies

The critical, human cultural toolkit, accumulating since the invention of race, that supports human well-being amid the social thought and practice of race.

## Appendix B: Instrumentation

### Student Identification by Teacher Task (Pre- and Post-)

#### SIT TASK

Outstanding teachers, like yourself, consider a number of things when they are helping their students. These factors include student identities. Some examples of student identities are listed on this sheet, but there may be other student identities beyond these to consider. When teachers are preparing for instruction, they may think about any number of student identities to help their students learn.

#### Students' Multiple Identities

nationality	ethnicity
race	citizenship status
age	gender
sexuality	(dis)ability
economic status	academic designation(s)
language	neighborhood/community affiliation(s)
<b>Other identities:</b>	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

6.	
7.	

### **Pre- and Post-Lesson Interview and Items from Question Bank**

#### **Pre-Post Lesson Interview Questions (SIT TASK)**

##### Pre-Lesson Interview Questions (Pre- 2a)

F.) Which texts/materials did you pick for this lesson?

G.) Why did you pick these texts/materials for this lesson?

H.) What did you need to know about [student first name] in order to prepare this lesson?

I.) After this literacy lesson, how will you know that your instruction with [student first name] was successful?

##### Post-Lesson Interview Questions (Post-2b)

J.) How did the texts/materials that you picked for this lesson work out today?

K.) What else do you need to know about [student first name], now that you have taught this lesson? Why? Are there other things that you need to know? Why?

L.) Do you feel that your instruction with [student first name] was successful today? Why?

##### Question Bank Items:

- How did this student's identities influence your text selection process?
- Which of this student's identities did you have in mind as you prepared this lesson?
- Which of this student's identities did you have in mind as you taught this lesson?
- Which of your own identities did you have in mind as you prepared this lesson?
- Which of your own identities did you have in mind as you taught this lesson?



## Instruction Observation Form

### Instruction Observation Form

Observation Date:

Begin Time: HH:MM am or pm

End Time: HH:MM am or pm

Teacher Observed (pseudonym):

Student(s) Observed (pseudonym):

Lesson Focus:

Adherence to literacy practicum lesson structure? Circle: Yes or No

If not, what is the lesson structure? Description

What **race talk** is used or avoided? Description

What **genres of race** are used?

Genre of Race	Time(s):	Teacher Use Tally	Student Use Tally	Text Use Tally
Labeling				
Ranking				
Common Sensing				
Sciencing				
Naturalizing				
Placializing				
Social Classing				
Naming				
Vindicating				

### Identities Featured in Text

Text Title	Time(s):	Teacher Use Tally	Student Use Tally	Text Use Tally
Gender				
Age				
Socioeconomic Status				
Sexual Orientation				
Mainstream Names				
Race Production				

What **race event(s)** occur as you observe?

Race event keyword: Word, word, word, etc.

Race event time: HH:MM

Race event situation (including persons involved with pseudonyms):

## CITED LITERATURE

- Adelson, J. L., Dickinson, E. R., & Cunningham, B. C. (2016). A multigrade, multiyear statewide examination of reading achievement: Examining variability between districts, schools, and students. *Educational Researcher*, 45(4), 258–262.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X16649960>
- Allington, R. L. (1983). The reading instruction provided readers of differing reading abilities. *The Elementary School Journal*, 83(5), 548–559. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/1001078>
- Anderson, J. D. (1995). Literacy and education in the African American experience. In V. L. Gadsden & D. A. Wagner (Eds.), *Literacy among African American youth: Issues in learning, teaching, and schooling* (pp. 19–37). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Anderson, J. D. (2007). The historical context for understanding the test score gap. *National Journal of Urban Education and Practice*, 1, 1–21.
- Appiah, A. (1986). The uncompleted argument: Du Bois and the illusion of race. In H. L. Gates (Ed.), *Race, writing, and difference* (p. 31-). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ares, N. M., & Peercy, M. M. (2003). Constructing literacy: How goals, activity systems, and text shape classroom practice. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 35(1), 633–662.  
[https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3501\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3501_4)
- Babad, E. (1993). Teachers' differential behavior. *Educational Psychology Review*, 5(4), 347–376. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01320223>
- Barr, R., & Dreeben, R. (1983). *How schools work*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Beaulieu, L. M. (2002). African American children and literacy: Literacy development across the elementary, middle, and high school years. In S. J. Denbo & L. M. Beaulieu (Eds.), *Improving schools for African American students: A reader for educational leaders* (pp. 133–146). Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.
- Bell, D. (1992). *Faces at the bottom of the well: The permanence of racism*. New York: Basic Books.
- Belt-Beyan, P. M. (2004). *The emergence of African American literacy traditions: Family and community efforts in the nineteenth century*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The social construction of reality*. New York: Doubleday.
- Bernasconi, R. (2001). Who invented the concept of race? Kant's role in the Enlightenment construction of race. In R. Bernasconi (Ed.), *Race* (pp. 11–36). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. *Perspectives*, 6(3).
- Bloome, D., & Beauchemin, F. (2016). Languageing everyday life in classrooms. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, 65, 152–165.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336916661533>
- Bloome, D., & Carter, S. P. (2014). Microethnographic discourse analysis. In P. Albers, T.

- Holbrook, & A. S. Flint (Eds.), *New methods of literacy research* (pp. 3–18). New York: Routledge.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (Fifth). Boston, MA: Pearson A & B.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2014). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America* (4th ed.). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Brandt, D. (1998). Sponsors of literacy. *College Composition and Communication*, 49(2), 165–185.
- Brandt, D. (2001). *Literacy in American lives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brayboy, B. M. J. (2005). Toward a tribal critical race theory in education. *The Urban Review*, 37(5), 425–446. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-005-0018-y>
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (Ed.). (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Burkholder, Z. (2011). *Color in the classroom: How American schools taught race, 1900-1954*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chall, J. S. (1967). *Learning to read: The great debate*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Chall, J. S. (2000). *The academic achievement challenge: What really works in the classroom?* New York: The Guilford Press.
- Chall, J. S., Jacobs, V. A., & Baldwin, L. E. (1990). *The reading crisis: Why poor children fall behind*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Chang, D. F., & Demyan, A. L. (2007). Teachers' stereotypes of Asian, Black, and White students. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 22(2), 91–114. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1045-3830.22.2.91>
- Compton-Lilly, C. (2006). Identity, childhood culture, and literacy learning: A case study. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 6(1), 57–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798406062175>
- Cornelius, J. (1992). *"When can I read my title clear": Literacy, slavery, and religion in the antebellum south*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.
- Craig, H. K., Connor, C. M., & Washington, J. A. (2003). Early positive predictors of later reading comprehension for African American students: A preliminary investigation. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 34(1), 31–43. [https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461\(2003/004\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461(2003/004))
- Crenshaw, K. W., Ocen, P., & Nanda, J. (2015). *Black girls matter: Pushed out, overpoliced, and underprotected*. New York.
- Croom, M. (unpublished). From post-racial to post-white in American literacy education.

Unpublished manuscript.

- Croom, M. (in press). Meet me at the corner: The intersection of literacy instruction and race for urban education. *Urban Education*.
- Croom, M. (2016a). Book review of Race frameworks: A multidimensional theory of racism and education. *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 12, 184–186.
- Croom, M. (2016). Racing on Facebook: Racial literacies, genres of race, and Black students. In G. Mance (Ed.), *The Black experience in an American diaspora*. Paper session conducted at the International Conference on Urban Education, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Retrieved from <http://racialliteracies.org>
- Croom, M. (2016b). Reading: “The crisis in Black education” from a post-White orientation. *Black History Bulletin*, 79(2), 18–26.
- Cunningham, J. W., & Fitzgerald, J. (1996). Epistemology and reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 31(1), 36–60.
- Da Silva, D. F. (2007). *Toward a global idea of race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 3(3), 54–70.
- DiCamillo, K., McGhee, A., & Fucile, T. (2010). *Bink and Gollie*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.
- Diop, C. A. (1974). *African origin of civilization: Myth or reality*. Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill.
- Diop, C. A. (1981). *Civilization or barbarism: An authentic anthropology*. New York: Lawrence Hill.
- DiPucchio, K., & Pham, L. (2008). *Grace for president*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.
- Dixson, A. (2008). “Taming the beast”: Race discourse and identity in a middle school classroom. In S. Greene (Ed.), *Literacy as a civil right: Reclaiming social justice in literacy teaching* (pp. 125–147). New York: Peter Lang.
- Dixson, A., & Bloome, D. (2007). Jazz, critical race theories, and the discourse analysis of literacy events in classrooms. In M. V. Blackburn & C. T. Clark (Eds.), *Literacy research for political action and social change* (pp. 29–52). New York: Peter Lang.
- Drake, S. C. (1987). *Black folk here and there* (Vol. 1). Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903). *The souls of black folk: Essays and sketches*. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1906). The color line belts the world. *W. E. B. Du Bois Papers*, (MS 312). Retrieved from <http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b207-i148>
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1999). *The souls of Black folk*. (J. H. L. Gates & T. H. Oliver, Eds.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Dyson, A. H. (2003). Popular literacies and the “all” children: Rethinking literacy development

- for contemporary childhoods. *Language Arts*, 81(2), 100–109.
- Edmonds, R. (1979). Effective schools for the urban poor. *Educational Leadership*, 37(1), 15–18, 20–24. Retrieved from [http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed\\_lead/el\\_197910\\_edmonds.pdf](http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_197910_edmonds.pdf)
- Edmondson, J. (2002). Asking different questions: Critical analysis and reading research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37(1), 113–119.
- Edwards, P. (1992). Involving parents in building reading instruction for African American children. *Theory Into Practice*, 31(4), 350–359.
- Eisner, E. W. (1994). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs*. New York: Macmillan.
- Fallace, T. (2011). *Dewey and the dilemma of race: An intellectual history 1895-1922*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Feuerstein, R., Feuerstein, R. S., & Falik, L. H. (2010). *Beyond smarter: Mediated learning and the brain's capacity for change*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Flood, J., & Lapp, D. (2005). Exemplary reading instruction in the elementary school: How reading develops, how students learn and how teachers teach. In J. Flood & P. L. Anders (Eds.), *Literacy development of students in urban schools: Research and policy*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Foorman, B., Francis, D. J., Beeler, T., Winikates, D., & Fletcher, J. (1997). Early interventions for children with reading problems: Study designs and preliminary findings. *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 8(1), 63–71. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ544382>
- Fryer, R. G., & Levitt, S. D. (2004). The causes and consequences of distinctively Black names. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 119(3), 767–805. <https://doi.org/10.1162/0033553041502180>
- Gates, H. L. (Ed.). (1986). *Race, writing, and difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gee, J. P. (1999). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. New York: Routledge.
- Gee, J. P. (2015). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourse* (Fifth). New York: Routledge.
- Gosa, T., & Alexander, K. (2007). Family (dis)advantage and the educational prospects of better off African American youth: How race still matters. *The Teachers College Record*, 109(2), 285–321. Retrieved from <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=12800>
- Gredler, M. E., & Shields, C. C. (2008). *Vygotsky's legacy*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Greene, S., & Abt-Perkins, D. (Eds.). (2003). *Making race visible: Literacy research for cultural understanding*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Grosfoguel, R. (2013). The structure of knowledge in Westernized universities: Epistemic racism/sexism and the four genocides/epistemicides of the long 16th century. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 9(1), 73–90.

<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17506200710779521>

- Guess, T. J. (2006). The social construction of whiteness: Racism by intent, racism by consequence. *Critical Sociology*, 32(4), 649–673.  
<https://doi.org/10.1163/156916306779155199>
- Guinier, L. (2004). From racial liberalism to racial literacy: Brown v. Board of Education and the interest-divergence dilemma. *The Journal of American History*, 91(1), 92–118.
- Haddix, M., & Price-Dennis, D. (2013). Urban fiction and multicultural literature as transformative tools for preparing English teachers for diverse classrooms. *English Education*, 45(3), 247–283.
- Hall, S. (1997). The spectacle of the “other.” In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural representation and signifying practices* (pp. 223–290). London: Sage Publications.
- Haller, E. J. (1985). Pupil race and elementary school ability grouping: Are teachers biased against Black children? *American Educational Research Journal*, 22(4), 465–483.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312022004465>
- Haney-Lopez, I. F. (1994). Social construction of race: Some observations on illusion, fabrication, and choice. *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, 29, 1–62.  
<https://doi.org/10.1525/sp.2007.54.1.23>.
- Happe, K. E. (2013). The body of race: Toward a rhetorical understanding of racial ideology. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 99(2), 131–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00335630601076326>
- Harris-Wright, K. (1999). Enhancing bidialectalism in urban African American students. In C. . T. Adger, D. Christian, & O. L. Taylor (Eds.), *Making the connection: Language and academic achievement among African American students* (pp. 53–60). Washington D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Heath, S. B. (1985). Being literate in America: A sociohistorical perspective. In J. A. Niles & R. V. Lalik (Eds.), *Issues in literacy: A research perspective* (pp. 1–18). The National Reading Conference.
- Henry, F., & Tator, C. (1994). The ideology of racism: “democratic racism.” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 26(2), 1–14.
- Hinchman, K. A., & Young, J. P. (2001). Speaking But not Being Heard: Two Adolescents Negotiate Classroom Talk about Text. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 33(2), 243–268.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10862960109548111>
- Holland, D., Lachicotte, Jr., W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- hooks, bell. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. London: Pluto Press.
- Hoover, M. R. (1978a). Characteristics of Black schools at grade level: A description. *The Reading Teacher*, 31(7), 757–762.
- Hoover, M. R. (1978b). Community attitudes toward Black English. *Language in Society*, 7(1), 65–87. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500005339>
- Hoover, M. R. (1990). A vindicationist perspective on the role of Ebonics (Black language) and

- other aspects of Ethnic Studies in the university. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 34(2), 251–262.
- Hoover, M. R., Dabney, N., & Lewis, S. (Eds.). (1990). *Successful Black and minority schools: Classic models*. San Francisco: Julian Richardson Associates.
- Hoover, M. R., & Fabian, M. (1996). *Super literacy: Patterns for reading*. Benicia, CA: Onyx Publishing Company.
- Horsford, S. D. (2014). When race enters the room: Improving leadership and learning through racial literacy. *Theory Into Practice*, 53(2), 123–130.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2014.885812>
- Irvine, J. J. (1986). Teacher-student interactions: Effects of student race, sex, and grade level. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78(1), 14–21. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-0663.78.1.14>
- Jackson, J. P., & Weidman, N. M. (2004). *Race, racism, and science: Social impact and interaction*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.
- Jackson, P. W. (1968). *Life in classrooms*. New York: Hole, Rinehart and Winston.
- Johnston, M. P. (2014). The Concept of Race on Campus: Exploring the Nature of College Students' Racial Conceptions. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55(3), 225–242.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0023>
- Jones-Wilson, F. C. (1988). Editorial note. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 57(3), 233–235. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2295421>
- Kamberelis, G. (2001). Producing heteroglossic classroom (micro) cultures through hybrid discourse practice. *Linguistics and Education*, 12(1), 85–125.
- King, J. E. (1991). Dysconscious Racism: Ideology, Identity, and the Miseducation of teachers. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 60(2), 133–146. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2295605>
- Kinloch, V. (2010). “To not be a traitor of Black English”: Youth perceptions of language rights in an urban context. *The Teachers College Record*, 112(1), 103–141. Retrieved from <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=15798>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2002). I ain't writin' nuttin': Permissions to fail and demands to succeed in urban classrooms. In L. D. Delpit & J. K. Dowdy (Eds.), *The skin that we speak: Thoughts on language and culture in the classroom* (pp. 107–120). New York: The New Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2005). Reading, writing, and race: Literacy practices of teachers in diverse classrooms. In T. L. McCarty (Ed.), *Language, literacy, and power in schooling* (pp. 133–150). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools. *Educational Researcher*, 35(7), 3–12.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X035007003>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2016). And then there is this thing called the curriculum: Organization, imagination, and mind. *Educational Researcher*, 45(2), 100–104.



<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X16639042>

- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate IV, W. F. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education. *The Teachers College Record*, 97(1), 47–68.
- Lalik, R., & Hinchman, K. A. (2001). Critical issues: Examining constructions of race in literacy research: Beyond silence and other oppressions of white liberalism. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 33(3), 529–561. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10862960109548122>
- Lee, C. D. (2000). Signifying in the zone or proximal development. In C. D. Lee & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 191–225). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leonardo, Z. (2013). *Race frameworks: A multidimensional theory of racism and education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lewis, A. E. (2011). *Race in the schoolyard: Negotiating the color line in classrooms and communities*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Lewis, A. E., & Diamond, J. B. (2015). *Despite the best intentions: How racial inequality thrives in good schools*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lewis, S., Casserly, M., Simon, C., Uzzell, R., & Palacios, M. (2012). *A call for change: Providing solutions for Black male achievement*. Washington D.C.
- Lleras, C., & Rangel, C. (2009). Ability grouping practices in elementary school and African American/Hispanic achievement. *American Journal of Education*, 115(2), 279–304.
- Long, D. A., Kelly, S., & Gamoran, A. (2012). Whither the virtuous cycle? Past and future trends in black-white inequality in educational attainment. *Social Science Research*, 41(1), 16–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2011.09.002>
- Lynn, M. (1999). Toward a Critical Race Pedagogy: A Research Note. *Urban Education*, 33(5), 606–626. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085999335004>
- Markus, H. R. (2008). Pride, prejudice, and ambivalence: Toward a unified theory of race and ethnicity. *American Psychologist*, 63(8), 651–670. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.63.8.651>
- McHenry, E. (2002). *Forgotten readers: Recovering the lost history of African American literary societies*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.
- McIntosh, P. (1990). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. *Independent School*, Winter, 31–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725880701859969>
- McPhail, I. P. (2005). A critique of George Weber's study: Inner-city children can be taught to read: Four successful schools. In B. Hammond, M. Hoover, & I. McPhail (Eds.), *Teaching African American learners to read: Perspectives and practices* (pp. 84–95). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Mertzman, T. (2008). Individualising scaffolding: teachers' literacy interruptions of ethnic minority students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. *Journal of Research*

- in Reading*, 31(2), 183–202. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2007.00356.x>
- Michaels, S. (1981). “Sharing time”: Children’s narrative styles and differential access to literacy. *Language in Society*, 10, 423–442.
- Mills, C. W. (1997). *The racial contract*. Ithica, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Milner, H. R. (2013). Analyzing Poverty, Learning, and Teaching Through a Critical Race Theory Lens. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 1–53. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X12459720>
- Mirón, L. F., & Inda, J. X. (2000). Race as a kind of speech act. *Cultural Studies*, 5, 85–107.
- Morgan, H. (1995). *Historical perspectives on the education of Black children*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.
- Morrell, E. (2008). *Critical literacy and urban youth: Pedagogies of access, dissent, and liberation*. New York: Routledge.
- Morrison, T. (1992). *Playing in the dark: Whiteness and the literary imagination*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Muhammad, G. E., & Haddix, M. (2016). Centering Black girls’ literacies : A review of literature on the multiple ways of knowing of Black girls. *National Council of Teachers of English*, (July), 299–336.
- Murrell, Jr., P. C. (2009). Identity, agency, and culture: Black achievement and educational attainment. In L. C. Tillman (Ed.), *The Sage Handbook of African American Education* (pp. 89–105). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Nakamura, L. (2014). Gender and race online. In M. Graham & W. H. Dutton (Eds.), *Society and the internet: How networks of information and communication are changing our lives* (pp. 81–96). Oxford University Press.
- Nasir, N. S. (2012). *Racialized identities: Race and achievement among African American youth*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Nasir, N. S., & Hand, V. M. (2006). Exploring sociocultural perspectives on race, culture, and learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(4), 449–475. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543076004449>
- Nasir, N. S., Snyder, C. R., Shah, N., & Ross, K. M. (2012). Racial storylines and implications for learning. *Human Development*, 55, 285–301. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000345318>
- O’Connor, C., Hill, L. D., & Robinson, S. R. (2009). Who’s at risk in school and what’s race got to do with it? *Review of Research in Education*, 33(1), 1–34. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X08327991>
- O’Connor, C., Lewis, A., & Mueller, J. (2007). Researching “Black” educational experiences and outcomes: Theoretical and methodological considerations. *Educational Researcher*, 36(9), 541–552. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X07312661>
- Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 41(3), 93–97. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X12441244>

- Parsons, S. A., Gallagher, M. A., Ainger, J., Bartolini, M. C., Bruyning, A. K., Clark, E., ... Smith, P. (2016). A content analysis of nine literacy journals, 2009-2014. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 48(4), 476–502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X16680053>
- Pascale, C.-M. (2008). Talking about race: Shifting the analytical paradigm. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 14(5), 723–741. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800408314354>
- Paul, J. L., & Marfo, K. (2001). Preparation of educational researchers in philosophical foundations of inquiry. *Review of Educational Research*, 71(4), 525–547. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543071004525>
- Pearson, B. Z., Conner, T., & Jackson, J. E. (2013). Removing obstacles for African American English-speaking children through greater understanding of language difference. *Developmental Psychology*, 49(1), 31–44. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028248>
- Pearson, P. D. (2004). The reading wars. *Educational Policy*, 18(1), 216–252.
- Peirce, L. (2010). *Big Nate: In a class by himself*. New York: HarperCollins Children's Books.
- Perkins, J. H. (2001). Listen to their teachers' voices: Effective reading instruction for fourth grade African American students. *Reading Horizons*, 41(4), 239–255. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ642873>
- Perkins, J. H., & Cooter, R. B. (2005). Evidence-based literacy education and the African American child. *The Reading Teacher*, 59(2), 194–198. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.59.2.9>
- Pierce, M., Katzir, T., Wolf, M., & Noam, G. (2010). Examining the Construct of Reading among Dysfluent Urban Children: A Factor Analysis Approach. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 42(2), 124–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10862961003796140>
- Pilonieta, P. (2017). First- and Second-Grade urban students' path to comprehension strategy use: A practitioner's framework. *Reading Psychology*, 38(4), 369–389. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2016.1278415>
- Pinder, S. O. (2012). *Whiteness and racialized ethnic groups in the United States: The politics of remembering*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.
- Prendergast, C. (2000). The Water in the Fishbowl: Historicizing Ways with Words. *Written Communication*, 17(4), 452–490. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088300017004002>
- Prendergast, C. (2003). *Literacy and racial justice: The politics of learning after Brown v. Board of Education*. Southern Illinois University.
- Puzzo, D. A. (1964). Racism and the Western tradition. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 25(4), 579–586.
- Ray Reutzel, D., & Mohr, K. A. J. (2015). 50 years of reading research quarterly (1965-2014): Looking back, moving forward. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 50(1), 13–35. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.87>
- Razfar, A., & Rumanapp, J. (2014). *Applying linguistics in the classroom: A sociocultural approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Rex, L. A. (2006). Acting “Cool” and “Appropriate”: Toward a framework for considering literacy classroom interactions when race is a factor. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 38(3),

- 275–325. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3803\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3803_2)
- Ricks, S. A. (2014). Falling through the cracks: Black girls and education. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Teaching & Learning*, 4(1), 10–21.
- Robbins, D. (2007). Critical review of sociocultural theory: Redefining L. S. Vygotsky's non-classical psychology. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, 4(1), 85–97. <https://doi.org/10.1515/IP.2007.005>
- Robinson, S. (2014). Triple Identity Theory: A theoretical framework for understanding gifted Black males with dyslexia. *Urban Education Research and Policy Annuals*, 4(1), 147–158. Retrieved from <https://journals.uncc.edu/urbaned/article/view/415>
- Rogers, R., & Mosley, M. (2006). Racial literacy in a second-grade classroom: Critical race theory, whiteness studies, and literacy research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 41(4), 462–495. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.41.4.3>
- Rowe, M. B. (1986). Wait time: Slowing down may be a way of speeding up! *Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(1), 43–50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002248718603700110>
- S.A.R.K. (2004). *A creative companion: How to free your creative spirit*. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts.
- Schott Foundation. (2015). *Black lives matter: The Schott 50 state report on public education and Black males*. Cambridge, MA.
- Sealey-Ruiz, Y. (2011). Dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline through racial literacy development in teacher education. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 8(2), 116–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2011.624892>
- Serravallo, J. (2015). *Reading strategies book*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.
- Skerrett, A. (2011). English teachers' racial literacy knowledge and practice. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 14(3), 313–330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2010.543391>
- Slavin, R. E., Madden, N. A., Karweit, N. L., Livermon, B. J., & Dolan, L. (1989). Can every child learn? An evaluation of "Success for All" in an urban elementary school. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 58(3), 357–366. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2295668>
- Sleeter, C. E. (1993). How white teachers construct race. In C. McCarthy & W. Crichlow (Eds.), *Race, identity, and representation in education* (pp. 157–171). New York: Routledge.
- Smith-Evans, L., George, J., Graves, F. G., Kaufman, L. S., & Frolich, L. (2014). *Unlocking opportunity for African American girls: A call to action for educational equity*. New York. Retrieved from [http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/unlocking\\_opportunity\\_for\\_african\\_american\\_girls\\_report.pdf](http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/unlocking_opportunity_for_african_american_girls_report.pdf)
- Solomon, R. P., Portelli, J. P., Daniel, B., & Campbell, A. (2005). The discourse of denial: how white teacher candidates construct race, racism and "white privilege." *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(2), 147–169. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320500110519>
- Spring, J. (2010). *Deculturalization and the struggle for equality* (Sixth). New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Stake, R. E. (1994). Case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 236–247). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications,.
- Stevenson, H. C. (2014). *Promoting racial literacy in schools: Differences that make a difference*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Strickland, D. S. (1994). Educating African American learners at risk: Finding a better way. *Language Arts*, 71(5), 328–336. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=EJ489246>
- Strickland, D. S. (2002). Early intervention for African American children considered to be at risk. In S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 322–332). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Stuurman, S. (2000). Francois Bernier and the invention of racial classification. *History Workshop Journal*, (50), 1–22.
- Sutherland, L. M. (2005). Black adolescent girls' use of literacy practices to negotiate boundaries of ascribed identity. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 37(3), 365–406. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3703\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3703_4)
- Tatum, A. W. (2009). *Reading for their life: (Re)building the textual lineages of Black adolescent males*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.
- Tatum, A. W., & Muhammad, G. E. (2012). African American males and literacy development in contexts that are characteristically urban. *Urban Education*, 47(2), 434–463. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085911429471>
- Taubman, P. M. (1993). Separate identities, separate lives: Diversity in the curriculum. In L. A. Castenell, Jr. & W. F. Pinar (Eds.), *Understanding curriculum as racial text: Representations of identity and difference in education* (pp. 287–306). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Tettegah, S. (1996). The racial consciousness attitudes of white prospective teachers and their perceptions of the teachability of students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds: Findings from a California study. *Journal of Negro Education*, 65(2), 151–163. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2967310>
- Twine, F. W. (2004). A white side of black Britain: The concept of racial literacy. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27(6), 878–907. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141987042000268512>
- Van den Bergh, L., Denessen, E., Hornstra, L., Voeten, M., & Holland, R. W. (2010). The implicit prejudiced attitudes of teachers: Relations to teacher expectations and the ethnic achievement gap. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(2), 497–527. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831209353594>
- van Sluys, K., Lewison, M., & Flint, A. S. (2006). Researching Critical Literacy: A Critical Study of Analysis of Classroom Discourse. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 38(2), 197–233. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3802\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15548430jlr3802_4)
- Villenas, S. (2010). Thinking Latina(o) education with and from Chicana/Latina feminist cultural

- studies: Emerging pathways--decolonial possibilities. In Z. Leonardo (Ed.), *Handbook of cultural politics and education* (pp. 451–476). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Problems of general psychology*. (R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton, Eds.), *The Collected Works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 1). New York: Plenum.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1997). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: The history of the development of higher mental functions*. (R. W. Rieber, Ed.) (Vol. 4). New York: Plenum.
- Walker, A. (2011). *In search of our mothers' gardens*. New York: Open Road Integrated Media.
- Warmington, P. (2009). Taking race out of scare quotes: Race-conscious social analysis in an ostensibly post-racial world. *Race Ethnicity & Education*, 12(3), 281–296.
- Weber, G. (1971). *Inner-city children can be taught to read: Four successful schools* (Vol. 18). Washington D.C. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED057125.pdf>
- Wells, G. (1994). The complementary contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky to a “language-based theory of learning.” *Linguistics and Education*, 6, 41–90.
- Wildman, S. M., & Davis, A. D. (2000). Language and silence: Making systems of privilege visible. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *Critical race theory: The cutting edge* (pp. 657–663). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Williams, G. W. (1883). *History of the Negro race in America from 1619 to 1880: Negroes as slaves, as soldiers, and as citizens* (Vol. 2). New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons. Retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/21851>
- Willis, A. I. (2015). Literacy and race: Access, equity, and freedom. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, 64, 23–55. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336915617617>
- Wilson, K. H. (1999). Towards a discursive theory of racial identity: The souls of black folk as a response to nineteenth-century biological determinism. *Western Journal of Communication*, 63(2), 193–215.
- Woodard, R., Vaughan, A., & Machado, E. (2017). Exploring culturally sustaining writing pedagogy in urban classrooms. *Literacy Research: Theory, Method, and Practice*, 66(1), 215–231. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2381336917719440>
- Woodson, C. G. (1933). *The mis-education of the Negro*. Washington D.C.: The Associated Publishers.
- Wortham, S. E. F. (2005). Socialization beyond the speech event. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 15(1), 95–112. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jlin.2005.15.1.95>
- Wynter, S. (2006). On how we mistook the map for the territory, and re-imprisoned ourselves in our unbearable wrongness of being, of Desetre: Black studies toward the human project. In L. R. Gordon & J. A. Gordon (Eds.), *Not only the master's tools* (pp. 107–169). Boulder,

CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Yamamoto, E. K. (1997). Critical race praxis: Race theory and political lawyering practice in post-civil rights America. *Michigan Law Review*, 95(4), 821–900.

Yamamoto, E. K. (1999). *Interracial justice: Conflict and reconciliation in post-civil rights America*. New York: New York University Press.

Yazan, B. (2015). Three approaches to case study methods in education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(2), 134–152. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR20/2/yazan1.pdf>

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Fifth). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

## VITA

### Marcus Croom

1256 Education Theatre Music Social Work Building  
1040 West Harrison Street  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Chicago, IL 60607  
[mcroom2@uic.edu](mailto:mcroom2@uic.edu) | [www.marcuscroom.com](http://www.marcuscroom.com)

### Current Positions

Graduate Research and Teaching Associate

### Areas of Specialization

Literacy, Language, and Culture; Teacher Education; Leadership; Urban Education

### Education

Doctor of Philosophy	University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago (May 2018) Literacy, Language, and Culture  Committee: Alfred Tatum, chair; Tania Mertzman Habeck; Amanda Lewis; Aria Razfar; Rebecca Woodard
Master of Education	North Carolina Central University, Durham, North Carolina (2011) H. M. Michaux Jr. School of Education, <i>magna cum laude</i>
Master of Divinity	Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina (2009) Shaw University Divinity School
Bachelor of Science	North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, Greensboro, North Carolina (2001) Music Education

### Professional Experience

***Graduate Research and Teaching Associate*** (2016 - present)  
College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
Instructor of record for ED 100: Introduction to Urban Education  
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago

***Graduate Research and Teaching Associate*** (2014)  
College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
Co-instructor for CI 505: Integrated Reading and Writing Instruction  
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago



***Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant*** (2011 - 2016)  
College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago

***Teaching Assistant*** (2009)  
School of Divinity  
OTS 502-601: Theory and Practice of Old Testament Exegesis  
Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina

***Teacher of Music*** (2006 - 2011)  
Durham County Schools; Durham, North Carolina  
Grades K-5

***Teacher of Music*** (2003 - 2006)  
Wayne County Schools; Goldsboro, North Carolina  
Grades 6-12

***Teacher of Music*** (2001 - 2002)  
Guilford County Schools; Greensboro, North Carolina  
Grades 6-8

## **Licensure**

Teacher Certification; Public School Grades K-12 in Music (2001 - 2016)  
Principal Certification (2011 - 2016)  
Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Trainer (2010-2011)  
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Certification (2010-2011)

## **Honors & Awards**

UIC College of Education Faculty  
Doctoral recipient, Dean's Merit Award (May 2018)

National Council of Teachers of English  
Fellow, Cultivating New Voices Among Scholars of Color (2016 - 2018 cohort)

Durham Public Schools and Durham Bulls Baseball Organization  
Team First Award (April, 2011)

## **Professional Affiliations**

American Educational Research Association (2016 - present)  
Division C (Learning and Instruction); Division G (Social Context of Education); Division K  
(Teaching and Teacher Education); Research Focus on Black Education SIG, Critical Examination of  
Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Education SIG, Writing and Literacies SIG, Research in Reading  
and Literacy SIG

International Literacy Association (2012 - present)  
Literacy Research Association (2016 - present)  
National Association for Music Education (2003 - 2011)

National Council of Teachers of English (2016 - present)  
North Carolina Association of Educators (2001 - 2011)

## Scholarly Publications

- Croom, M. (in preparation). Racial literacies in teacher preparation.
- Croom, M. (in preparation). Racial literacies: Expanding the meaningfulness of “racial literacy.”
- Croom, M. (in preparation). Outlining a practice theory of race.
- Croom, M. (in preparation). Race defined: A contribution to critical race theory, education, literacy, and other fields.
- Croom, M. (in press). Meet me at the corner: The intersection of literacy instruction and race for urban education. *Urban Education*.
- Croom, M. (2016). Reading: “The crisis in Black education” from a post-White orientation. *Black History Bulletin*, 79(2), 18–26. [https://www.academia.edu/34021563/Reading\\_The\\_Crisis\\_in\\_Black\\_Education\\_from\\_a\\_post-White\\_orientation](https://www.academia.edu/34021563/Reading_The_Crisis_in_Black_Education_from_a_post-White_orientation)
- Croom, M. (2016) Book review of *Race frameworks: A multidimensional theory of racism and education* by Zeus Leonardo. New York: Teachers College Press. *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 12, 184-186. [https://www.academia.edu/34021481/Book\\_review\\_of\\_Race\\_frameworks\\_A\\_multidimensional\\_theory\\_of\\_racism\\_and\\_education\\_by\\_Zeus\\_Leonardo](https://www.academia.edu/34021481/Book_review_of_Race_frameworks_A_multidimensional_theory_of_racism_and_education_by_Zeus_Leonardo)

## Scholarly Presentations

### *Presenter:*

- Croom, M. (2018, April). *Theory and method in race critical literacy research*. Invited research colloquium at Judson University Graduate Programs in Literacy Education, Elgin, Illinois.
- Croom, M. (2018, February). *Race analysis of literacy instruction for urban education*. Paper presented at the meeting of UIC College of Education Annual Research Day, Chicago, Illinois.
- Croom, M. (2017, November). *Social identification and instructional practice among literacy teachers*. Poster session presented at the meeting of National Council of Teachers of English, St. Louis, Missouri.
- Croom, M. (2016, November). *Construing and practicing race in literacy instruction*. Poster session presented at the meeting of National Council of Teachers of English, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Croom, M. (2016, November). *Toward the social practice of race in literacy instruction*. Paper presented at the meeting of Literacy Research Association, Nashville, Tennessee.
- Croom, M. (2016, November). *Racing on Facebook: Racial literacies, genres of race, and Black students*. Paper presented at the meeting of International Conference on Urban Education, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Croom, M. (2016, January). *Racing on Facebook: Racial literacies, genres of race, and Black students*. Paper presented at the meeting of UIC College of Education Annual Research Day, Chicago, Illinois.

Croom, M. (2011, April). “*All Students*” specifically includes Black males. Paper presented at the meeting of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Collaborative Conference for Student Achievement (CCSA), Greensboro, North Carolina.

*Chair:*

Croom, M. (2018, April). *Critical examinations of literature in the education of students of color*. Chair of paper session at the meeting of American Educational Research Association, New York.

Croom, M. (2018, April). *Racial scrutiny of Black bodies in the academy*. Chair of paper session at the meeting of American Educational Research Association, New York.

Croom, M. (2017, November). *Racial literacies in teacher preparation*. Chair of paper session at the meeting of Literacy Research Association, Tampa, Florida.

## **Interviews and Media Contributions**

Racial literacies: Just reading and writing is deadly in America. *Medium* (2016).  
<https://medium.com/@maruscroom/racial-literacies-just-reading-and-writing-is-deadly-in-america-8c4ce00caaa4#.wyb4ed35r>

Creating race in the classroom. *UIC Recess Blog* (2016).  
<http://education.uic.edu/academics-admissions/student-life/creating-race-classroom>

Preparing Black scholars for leadership roles in education can be key to closing academic achievement gaps among minority students. *Atlanta Black Star* (2015).  
<http://atlantablackstar.com/2015/07/08/preparing-black-scholars-leadership-roles-education-can-key-closing-academic-achievement-gaps-among-minority-students/>

D97 candidate wants to give all taxpayers a voice. *Wednesday Journal* (2015).  
<http://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/3-19-2015/D97-candidate-wants-to-give-all-taxpayers-a-voice/>

Croom promises instructional leadership in D97. *Wednesday Journal* (2015).  
<http://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/3-17-2015/Croom-promises-instructional-leadership-in-D97/>

Summer program seeks future Black male education profs. *UIC News* (2015).  
<http://education.uic.edu/news-events/news/summer-program-seeks-future-black-male-education-profs#.V7jciMeATzI>

Building future Black teachers. *UIC Recess Blog* (2014).  
<http://education.uic.edu/academics-admissions/student-life/building-future-black-teachers>

## **Consulting**

Cook County School District 130, Blue Island, Illinois  
*Literacy Auditor (March, 2016)*

Oak Park, Illinois  
*Private Student Assessment and Tutoring (Fall 2015)*

Smyth Elementary Chicago Public School, Chicago, Illinois  
*Literacy Auditor (October, 2015)*

## **Teaching**

### **University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois**

ED 100: Introduction to Urban Education (Fall, 2016 - present)

Instructor: This core curriculum, required course is an introductory and cross-disciplinary examination of issues related to education in urban America, with particular attention paid to policies and practices impacting diversity and equity in public schools.

Instructor evaluation comment: *“This was one of my favorite classes I’ve ever taken. The content was so interesting and so relatable to everything else I’m studying. I will use all of this information in the future.”*

Instructor evaluation comment: *“characteristics of this course that were most beneficial to me were that this class was more student lead. it was interesting and great to hear other people's perspectives on certain readings”*

CI 505: Graduate Course on Integrated Reading and Writing Instruction (Spring, 2014)

Co-Instructor: This graduate course examines the reading-writing relationship. Specific instructional strategies are offered for teaching reading and writing together in the elementary grades.

## **Academic Advising**

### **University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Education**

Supervision of Student Teaching in Urban Education Program; Elementary Education (2014 - 2015)

During student teaching, student teachers are observed several times by a university field instructor.

This instructor is the liaison between the student teacher, the cooperating teacher and other individuals at the school and university.

## **Service**

### **Professional Reviewing**

Literacy Research Association: conference proposals, manuscripts for journal (2016 - present)

American Educational Research Association: conference proposals (2017 - present)

### **National**

American Psychological Association

Authored the Division 15 Memorial Awards biography of Robert (Bob) Calfee (2015);  
<http://apadiv15.org/in-honor-of-dr-robert-bob-chilton-calfee-1933-2014/>

Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color  
Volunteer (2013)

### **Community**

Oak Park, Illinois

Board, Collaboration for Early Childhood (2017-present): This nonprofit organization is a model public/private partnership that leverages the resources of more than 60 local agencies to create a community-wide system of high-quality programs and services that foster physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development during the critical first five years of life.

Candidate, Board of Education election (2015): As an African American resident of Oak Park and as a parent of District 97 schools, I ran for elected service with this message: "When each child excels, we all win." Campaign video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3-VBjIFTg>

Chicago, Illinois

Member, Education Committee of Congressman Danny K. Davis (2013)

### **University**

University of Illinois at Chicago

Designer and Coordinator, Next Generation of African American Male Professors (Summer 2015 - 2017)

Designer and Coordinator, Pre-College Leadership and Impact Program (Summer 2013 - 2017)

Member, Search Committee, Dean of the College of Education (2013 - 2014)

### **College**

University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Education

Student Leadership Advisory Board (2014 - present)

Doctoral Student Forum (2012 - 2013)

### **Department**

University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Curriculum and Instruction:

Founding member, Literacy, Language, and Culture Doctoral Student Facebook Group (2011 - present)

Volunteer, Trigraphathon hosted by UIC Reading Clinic (2013)

Co-author, *How Parents Can Help With Reading Guide* by UIC Reading Clinic (2012)